A DISCOURSE OF THE PASTORAL CARE.

WRITTEN

BY THE RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN GOD,

GILBERT,

LATE LORD BISHOP OF SARUM.

With a new PREFACE; and some other additions.

FIRST PRINTED M.DC.XCII.

GLASGOW,

PRINTED BY ROBERT AND ANDREW FOULIS

M DCC LXII.

FH
MVSEVM
BRITANNICVM

TO THE

QUEEN'S

MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR MAJESTY,

THE title of Defender of the Faith, is ſo inherent in the royal dignity, and ſo eſſential a part of its ſecurity, as well as of its glory, that there was no need of papal bulls to add it to the crown your Majeſty now wears: you hold it by a much better tenure, as well as by a more ancient poſſeſſion. Nor can one reflect on the Pope's giving it to King Henry the VIII, without remembring what is ſaid of Caiaphas, that "being High Prieſt that year, he propheſied." For ſince that time, the true faith hath been ſo eminently defended by our princes, and that of both ſexes, we having had our Pulcheria's as well as our Conſtantine's and our Theodoſe's, that this church has been all along the chief ſtrength

and honour of the reformation, as well as the main object of the envy and ſpite of thoſe of the Roman communion.

But tho' your Majeſty's royal anceſtors have done ſo much for us, there remains yet a great deal to be done for the completing of our reformation, eſpecially as to the lives and manners of men. This will moſt effectually be done by obliging the clergy to be more examplary in their lives, and more diligent and faithful in the diſcharge of their paſtoral duty. And this work ſeems to be reſerved for your Majeſties, and deſigned to be the felicity and glory of your reign. To ſerve God by promoting this great and glorious deſign, which is ſo truly worthy of your Majeſty's beſt care and endeavours, I have purpoſely written this treatiſe, which I do with all humility dedicate and preſent to your ſacred Majeſty.

May that God who is the King of Kings, and hath bleſs'd us with two ſuch excellent Princes, preſerve you both long to us, and make you as happy in us, as we are in you:

may you reign over us till you have accomplished all those great designs for which God hath raised you up, and with which he hath filled your hearts: and may this church be made by your means, the "perfection of "beauty, and the joy of the whole earth."

These are the daily and most fervent prayers of,

May it please your Majesty,

Your Majesty's most loyal,

most humble, and most obedient

Subject and Chaplain,

GI. SARUM.

SMITH

THE PREFACE.

THIS ſubject, how important ſoever in it ſelf, yet has been ſo little treated of, and will ſeem ſo ſevere in many parts of it, that if I had not judged this a neceſſary ſervice to the church, which did more decently come from one, who, how undeſerving ſoever he is, yet is raiſed to a poſt that may juſtify the writing on ſo tender a head; I ſhould never have undertaken it. But my zeal for the true intereſt of religion, and of this church, determined me to ſet about it: yet ſince my deſign is to correct things for the future, rather than to reproach any for what is paſt, I have reſolved to caſt it rather into advices and rules, into plain and ſhort directions, than into long and laboured diſcourſes, ſupported by the ſhews of learning, and citations from fathers, and hiſtorical obſervations; this being the more profitable, and the leſs invidious way of handling the ſubject.

It ought to be no imputation on a church, if too many of thoſe that are dedicated to her ſervice, have not all the characters that are here ſet forth, and that are to be deſired in clergymen. Even in the Apoſtles days there were falſe Apoſtles, and falſe teachers; as one of the twelve was a traytor, and had a devil. Some loved the pre-eminence; others loved this preſent world to a ſcandalous degree. Some of thoſe that preached Chriſt, did

it * " not ſincerely, but out of contention: " they vied with the Apoſtles, and hoped to have carried away the eſteem from them, even while they were ſuffering for the faith: for envying their credit, they deſigned to raiſe their own authority, by leſſening the Apoſtles, and ſo hoped to have added affliction to their bonds. In the firſt and pureſt ages of the church we find great complaints of the neglects and diſorders of the clergy of all ranks. Many became the Stewards and Bailiffs of other peoples eſtates; and while they looked too diligently after thoſe cares which did not belong to them, they even in thoſe times of trial, grew very remiſs in the moſt important of all cares, which was their proper buſineſs.

As ſoon as the empire became chriſtian, the authority, the immunity, and the other advantages, which by the bounty of Princes followed the ſacred functions, made them to be generally much deſired; and the elections being then for the moſt part popular, (though in ſome of the greater cities, the magiſtracy took them into their hands and the Biſhops of the province were the judges both of the fitneſs of the perſon, and of the regularity of the election); theſe were managed with much faction and violence, which often ended in blood, and that to ſo great an exceſs, that if we had not witneſſes to many inſtances of this among the beſt men in thoſe ages, it would look like an uncharitable imputation on thoſe times, to think them capable of ſuch enormities. In-

* Phil. 1. 16.

deed the diſorders, the animoſities, the going ſo oft backwards and forwards in the matters of faith, as the Emperor happened to be of different ſides, are but too ample a proof of the corruptions that had then got into the church. And what can we think of the breach made in the churches of Africk by Donatus and his followers, upon ſo inconſiderable a point, as whether Cecilian and his ordainers had denied the faith in the laſt perſecution, or not? which grew to that height, that almoſt in every town of Africk there were divided aſſemblies, and ſeparating Biſhops, upon that account. Nor was this wound healed but with the utter ruin of thoſe churches. St. Jerom, though partial enough to his own ſide, as appears by his eſpouſing Damaſus's intereſts, notwithſtanding that vaſt effuſion of blood that had been at his election; which was ſet on by him, and continued for four days with ſo much violence, that in one night, and at one church, a hundred and ſeven and thirty were killed; yet he could not hold from laying open the corruptions of the clergy in a very ſevere ſtile. He grew ſo weary of them, and they of him, that he went and ſpent the reſt of his days at Bethlehem.

Thoſe corruptions were ſo much the more remarkable, becauſe the eminent men of thoſe times procured a great many canons to be made, both in provincial and general councils, for correcting abuſes, as ſoon as they obſerved them creeping into the church: but it is plain from St. Chryſoſtom's ſtory, that though bad men did

not oppoſe the making good rules. while they were ſo many dead letters in their regiſters; yet they could not bear the rigorous execution of them: ſo that thoſe good canons do ſhew us indeed what were the growing abuſes of the times, in which they were made; and how good men ſet themſelves againſt them; but are no ſure indications of the reformation that was effected by them.

The tottering ſtate of the Roman empire, which had then fallen under a vaſt diſſolution of diſcipline and manners, and coming into feeble hands, was then ſinking with its own weight, and was become on all ſides an eaſy prey to its invaders, who were either Pagans or Arians, ought to have awakened the governors of the church to have apprehended their approaching ruin; to have prevented it by their prayers and endeavours; and to have corrected thoſe abuſes which had provoked God, and weakned and diſtracted both church and empire. But if we may believe either Gildas here in Britain, or Salvian in France, they rather grew worſe, more impenitent, and more inſenſible, when they ſaw the judgments of God coming upon the empire, province after province rent from it, and over-run by the barbarians.

When that great wound was in ſome ſort healed, and a ſecond form of chriſtianity roſe up and prevailed again in the weſtern parts, and the world became chriſtian, with the allay that dark and ſuperſtitious ages had brought into that holy doctrine: then all the rules of former ages were ſo totally forgotten, and laid aſide,

that the clergy univerſally loſt their eſteem: and tho' Charles the Great, and his ſon, held a great many councils for correcting theſe abuſes, and publiſhed many capitulars on the ſame deſign; yet all was to no purpoſe: there was neither knowledge nor virtue enough left to reform a corruption that was become univerſal. The clergy by theſe diſorders fell under a general contempt, and out of that roſe the authority, as well as the wealth of the monaſtic orders: and when riches and power had corrupted them, the begging orders took away the credit from both; yet even their reputation, which the outward ſeverity of their rule, habit, and manner of life did both eſtabliſh and maintain long, was at laſt ſo generally loſt, that no part or body of the Roman clergy had credit enough to ſtop the progreſs of the reformation; which was in a great meaſure occaſioned by the ſcorn and hatred that fell on them, and which was ſo ſpread over all parts of Europe, that to it, even their own hiſtorians do impute the great advances that Luther's doctrine made for about fifty years together; whole kingdoms and provinces embracing it as it were all of the ſudden.

It has now for above an hundred years made a full ſtand, and in moſt places it has rather loſt ground, than gained any. The true account of this is not eaſily given; the doctrine is the ſame; and it has been of late defended with greater advantages, with more learning, and better reaſoning than it was at firſt; yet with

much leſs ſucceſs. The true reaſon of the ſlackning of that work, muſt be imputed to the reformation made in ſeveral points with relation to the manners and the labours of the clergy, by the church of Rome, and the depravation under which moſt of the reformed churches are fallen. For the manners and the labours of the clergy, theſe are real arguments, which all people do both underſtand and feel; they have a much more convincing force, they are more viſible, and perſuade more univerſally, than books can do, which are little read, and leſs conſidered: and indeed the bulk of mankind is ſo made, that there is no working on them, but by moving their affections, and commanding their eſteem. It cannot be denied, but that the council of Trent eſtabliſhed the errors of popery in ſuch a manner, as to cut off all poſſibility of ever treating, or re-uniting with them; ſince thoſe deciſions, and their infallibility, which is their foundation, are now ſo twiſted together: yet they eſtabliſhed ſuch a reformation in diſcipline, as may make churches that pretend to a more glorious title, juſtly aſhamed. For tho' there are ſuch reſerves made for the plenitude of the papal authority, that in great inſtances, and for a favourite, all may be broke through; yet the moſt notorious abuſes are ſo ſtruck at, and this has been in many places ſo effectually obſerved, chiefly where they knew that their deportment was looked into, and watched over by proteſtants, that it muſt be acknowledged, that the cry of the ſcandals of religious houſes is

much laid: and though their is ſtill much ignorance among their maſs Prieſts; yet their pariſh-Prieſts are generally another ſort of men: they are well inſtructed in their religion; lead regular lives, and perform their parochial duties with a moſt wonderful diligence. They do not only ſay maſs, and the other public functions daily, but they are almoſt perpetually employing themſelves in the ſeveral parts of their cures: inſtructing the youth, hearing confeſſions, and viſiting the ſick: and beſides all this, they are under the conſtant obligation of the breviary: there is no ſuch thing as non reſidence or plurality to be heard of in whole countries of that communion; and though about cathedrals, and in greater cities, the vaſt number of Prieſts gives ſtill great and juſt occaſion to cenſure, yet the pariſh Prieſts have almoſt univerſally recovered the eſteem of the people: they are no more diſpoſed to think ill of them, or to hearken to any thing that may give them a juſt cauſe, or at leaſt a plauſible colour for departing from them. So that the reformation that popery hath been forced to make, has in a great meaſure ſtopt the progreſs of the reformation of the doctrine and worſhip that did ſo long carry every thing before it.

But this is the leaſt melancholy part of the account that may be given of this matter. The reformers began that bleſſed work with much zeal; they and their firſt ſucceſſors carried it on with learning and ſpirit: they were active in their endeavours, and conſtant and patient

in their ſufferings, and theſe things turned the eſteem of the world, which was alienated from popery by the ignorance and ſcandals of the clergy, all towards them: but when they felt the warmth of the protection and encouragement that Princes and ſtates gave them, they inſenſibly ſlackned: they fell from their firſt heat and love; they began to build houſes for themſelves, and their families, and neglected the houſe of God: they reſted ſatisfied with their having reformed the doctrine and worſhip; but did not ſtudy to reform the lives and manners of their people: and while in their offices they lamented the not having a public diſcipline in the church, as it was in the primitive times; they have either made no attempts at all, or at leaſt very faint ones for reſtoring it. And thus, while popery has purified it ſelf from many former abuſes, reformed churches have added new ones to the old, that they ſtill retain, and are fond of. Zeal in devotion, and diligence in the paſtoral care, are fallen under too viſible and too ſcandalous a decay. And whereas the underſtanding of the ſcriptures, and an application to that ſacred ſtudy, was at firſt the diſtinguiſhing character of proteſtants, for which they were generally nicknamed goſpellers: theſe holy writings are now ſo little ſtudied, that ſuch as are obliged to look narrowly into the matter, find great cauſe of regret and lamentation, from the groſs ignorance of ſuch as are either in orders, or that pretend to be put in them.

But the moſt capital and comprehenſive of all abuſes,

is, that the falſe opinion of the worſt ages of popery, that made the chief, if not the only obligation of Prieſts to be the performing offices; and judged, that if theſe were done, the chief part of their buſineſs was alſo done, by which the paſtoral care came to be in a great meaſure neglected, does continue ſtill to leaven us: while men imagine that their whole work conſiſts in public functions, and ſo reckon, that if they either do theſe themſelves, or procure and hire another perſon in holy orders to do them, that then they anſwer the obligation that lies on them: and thus the paſtoral care, the inſtructing, the exhorting, the admoniſhing and reproving, the directing and conducting, the viſiting and comforting the people of the pariſh, is generally neglected; while the incumbent does not think fit to look after it, and the curate thinks himſelf bound to nothing but barely to perform offices according to agreement.

It is chiefly on deſign to raiſe the ſenſe of the obligations of the clergy to the duties of the paſtoral care that this book is written. Many things do concur in our preſent circumſtances, to awaken us of the clergy, to mind and do our duty with more zeal and application than ever. It is very viſible that in this preſent age, the reformation is not only at a ſtand, but is going back, and grows ſenſibly weaker and weaker. Some churches have been plucked up by the roots, and brought under a total deſolation and diſperſion, and others have fallen under terrible oppreſſions and ſhakings. We have ſeen a

deſign formed and carried on long, for the utter deſtruction of that great work. The clouds were ſo thick gathered over us, that we ſaw we were marked out for deſtruction: and when that was once compaſſed, our enemies ſaw well enough, that the reſt of their deſigns would be more eaſily brought about. It is true, our enemies intended to ſet us one upon another by turns, to make us do half their work; and to have ſtill an abuſed party among us ready to carry on their ends; for they thought it too bold an attempt, to fall upon all at once; but while they were thus ſhifting hands, it pleaſed God to cut them ſhort in their deſigns, and to blaſt that part of them in which we were concerned, ſo entirely, that now they carry them on more barefacedly; and drive at conqueſt, which is at one ſtroke to deſtroy our church and religion, our laws and our properties.

In this critical ſtate of things, we ought not only to look at the inſtruments of the calamities that have fallen ſo heavily on ſo many proteſtant churches, and of the dangers that hang over the reſt; but we ought chiefly to look up to that God, who ſeems to be provoked at the whole reformation, becauſe they have not walked ſuitably to the light that they have ſo long enjoyed, and the bleſſings which had been ſo long continued to them but have corrupted their ways before him. They have loſt the power of religion, while they have ſeemed to magnify the form of it, and have been zealous for opinions and cuſtoms; and therefore God has in his wrath

taken even that form from them, and has loathed their ſolemn aſſemblies; and brought them under a famine of the word of the Lord, which they had ſo much deſpiſed. While theſe things are ſo, and while we find that we our ſelves are as a brand plucked out of the fire, which may be thrown back into it again if we are not alarmed by the juſt, but unſearchable judgments of God, which have waſted other churches ſo terribly, while they have only frighted us: what is more evident than that the preſent ſtate of things, and the ſigns of the times, call aloud upon the whole nation to bring forth "fruits "meet for repentance? ſince the ax is laid to the root "of the tree." And as this indeed concerns the body of the nation, ſo we who are the Prieſts and miniſters of the Lord, are under more particular obligations, firſt to look into our own ways, and to reform whatſoever is amiſs among us, and then to be interceſſors for the people committed to our charge: to be mourning for their ſins, and by our ſecret faſtings and prayers, to be ſtanding in thoſe breaches which our crying abominations have made; and ſo to be averting thoſe judgments which may be ready to break in upon us: and chiefly to be "lifting up our voices like trumpets, to ſhew our people "their tranſgreſſions." To be giving them faithful warning, from which we may expect this bleſſed ſucceſs, that we may at leaſt gain upon ſuch a number, that for their ſakes, God, "who will not ſlay the righteous "with the wicked," may be yet intreated for our ſins;

and that the judgments which hang over us, being quite diſſipated, his goſpel, together with peace and plenty, may ſtill dwell among us, and may ſhine from us, with happy influences, to all the ends of the earth. And even ſuch paſtors as ſhall faithfully do their duty, but without any ſucceſs, may depend upon this, that they ſhall ſave their own ſouls; and ſhall have a diſtinguiſhed fate, if we ſhould happen to fall under a common calamity: they having on them not only the mark of mourners and interceſſors, but of faithful Shepherds: whereas if an overflowing ſcourge ſhould break in upon us, we have all poſſible reaſon, both from the judgments of God, and the preſent ſituation of affairs, to believe that it will begin at the ſanctuary, at thoſe who have profaned the holy things, and have made the daily ſacrifice to be loathed.

There is another, and perhaps yet a more diſmal character of the preſent ſtate of the age, that calls on the clergy to conſider well both their own deportment, and the obligations that lie upon them; which is the growing atheiſm and impiety that is daily gaining ground, not only among us, but indeed all Europe over. There is a circulation obſerved in the general corruptions of nations: ſometimes ignorance and brutality over-runs the world, that makes way for ſuperſtition and idolatry: when mankind is diſguſted with theſe, then fantaſtical and enthuſiaſtical principles, and under theſe hypocritical practices have their courſe; theſe being ſeen through,

give great occaſions to profaneneſs, and with that, atheiſm, and a diſbelief of all religion, at leaſt of all revealed religion, is nouriſhed: and that is very eaſily received by depraved minds, but very hardly rooted out of them: for though it is very eaſy to beat an enquirer into things, out of all ſpeculative atheiſm; yet when a diſbelief of ſacred matters, and a profane contempt of them, has once vitiated one's mind, it is a very extraordinary thing, and next to miraculous, to ſee ſuch an one reduced. Now this I am forced to declare, that having had much free converſation with many that have been fatally corrupted that way, they have very often owned to me, that nothing promoted this ſo much in them, as the very bad opinion which they took up of all clergymen of all ſides: they did not ſee in them that ſtrictneſs of life, that contempt of the world, that zeal, that meekneſs, humility and charity; that diligence and earneſtneſs, with relation to the great truths of the chriſtian religion, which they reckoned they would moſt certainly have, if they themſelves firmly believed it: therefore they concluded, that thoſe, whoſe buſineſs it was more ſtrictly to enquire into the truth of their religion, knew that it was not ſo certain, as they themſelves, for other ends, endeavoured to make the world believe it was: and that, though for carrying on of their own authority or fortunes, which in one word, they call their trade, they ſeemed to be very poſitive in affirming the truth of their doctrines; yet they in their own hearts did not be-

lieve it, ſince they lived ſo little ſuitable to it, and were ſo much ſet on raiſing themſelves by it; and ſo little on advancing the honour of their profeſſion, by an exemplary piety, and a ſhining converſation.

This is a thing not to be anſwered by being angry at them for ſaying it, or by reproaching ſuch as repeat it, as if they were enemies to the church; theſe words of heat and faction ſignifying nothing to work upon, or convince any. For how little ſtrength ſoever there may be in this, as it is made an argument, it is certainly ſo ſtrong a prejudice, that nothing but a real refutation of it, by the eminent virtues and labours of many of the clergy, will ever conquer it. To this, as a branch or part of it, another conſideration from the preſent ſtate of things is to be added, to call upon the clergy to ſet about the duties of their calling; and that is, the contempt they are generally fallen under, the injuſtice they daily meet with, in being denied their rights, and that by ſome out of principle, and by others out of downright and undiſguiſed ſacrilege. I know a great deal of this is too juſtly, and too truly to be caſt on the poverty of the clergy: but what can we ſay, when we find often the pooreſt Clerks in the richeſt livings? whoſe incumbents not content to devour the patrimony of the church, "while they feed themſelves, and not the flock" out of it, are ſo ſcandalouſly hard in their allowance to their curates, as if they intended equally to ſtarve both curate and people: and is it to be ſuppoſed, that the people

will think themſelves under a very ſtrict obligation of conſcience, to pay religiouſly all that is due to one, who ſeems to think himſelf under no obligation to labour for it? and ſince it is a maxim founded upon natural equity, 'that the benefice is given for the office;' men will not have great ſcruples in denying the benefice, where the office is neglected, or ill performed. And as for the too common contempt that is brought on the clergy, how guilty ſoever thoſe may be, who out of hatred to their profeſſion deſpiſe them for their works ſake; yet we who feel our ſelves under theſe diſadvantages ought to reflect on thoſe words of the Prophet, and ſee how far they are applicable to us; * "The Prieſts lips ſhould "keep knowledge, and they ſhould ſeek the law at his "mouth, for he is the Meſſenger of the Lord of Hoſts. "But ye are departed out of the way, ye have cauſed "many to ſtumble at the law; therefore have I alſo "made you contemptible and baſe before all people, "according as you have not kept my ways, but have "been partial in my law." If we ſtudied to honour God, and ſo to do honour to our profeſſion, we might juſtly hope that he would raiſe it again to that credit which is due to it; and that he would make even our enemies to be at peace with us, or at leaſt afraid to hurt or offend us. And in this we have good reaſon to reſt aſſured, ſince we do not find many inſtances of clergymen, who live and labour, who preach and viſit as they

* Mal. ii. 7, 8, 9.

ought to do, that are under any eminent degrees of contempt: if ſome do deſpiſe thoſe that are faithful to their truſt, yet they muſt do it ſecretly; they dare not ſhew it, as long as their deportment procures them the eſteem, which we muſt confeſs does generally follow true worth, and hearty labours in the miniſtry.

Theſe are things of ſuch conſequence, that it may ſeem a conſideration too full of ill nature, of emulation, and of jealouſy, if I ſhould urge upon the clergy the diviſions and ſeparation that is formed among us; though there is a terrible word in the Prophet, that belongs but too evidently to this likewiſe; * "The Paſtors "are become brutiſh, and have not ſought the Lord; "therefore they ſhall not proſper, and all their flocks "ſhall be ſcattered." If we led ſuch exemplary lives as became our character, if we applied ourſelves wholly to the duties of our profeſſion; if we ſtudied to out-live, and out-labour thoſe that divide from us; we might hope, by the bleſſing of God, ſo far to overcome their prejudices, and to gain both upon their eſteem and affections, that a very ſmall matter might go a great way towards the healing of thoſe wounds, which have ſo long weakened and diſtracted us. Speculative arguments do not reach the underſtandings of the greater part, who are only capable of ſenſible ones: and the ſtrongeſt reaſonings will not prevail, till we firſt force them to think the better of our church, for what

* Jer. x. 21.

they ſee in ourſelves, and make them wiſh to be of a communion, in which they ſee ſo much truth, and unaffected goodneſs and worth: when they are once brought ſo far, it will be eaſy to compaſs all the reſt: if we did generally mind our duties, and diſcharge them faithfully, this would prepare ſuch as mean well in their ſeparation from us, to conſider better of the grounds on which they maintain it: and that will beſt enforce the arguments that we have to lay before them. And as for ſuch as divide from us with bad deſigns, and an unrelenting ſpite, they will have a ſmall party, and a feeble ſupport, if there were no more occaſion given to work on the affections of the people by our errors and diſorders.

If then either the ſenſe of the wrath of God, or the deſire of his favour and protection; if zeal for our church and country; if a ſenſe of the progreſs of atheiſm and irreligion; if the contempt that falls on us, and the injuſtices that are daily done us; if a deſire to heal and unite, to purify and perfect this our church: if either the concerns of this world, or of the next, can work upon us, and affect us, all theſe things concur to call on us, to apply our utmoſt care and induſtry to raiſe the honour of our holy profeſſion, to walk worthy of it, to perform the engagements that we came under at the altar, when we were dedicated to the ſervice of God, and the church; and in all things both to adorn our religion and our church.

It is not our boasting that the church of England is the best reformed, and the best constituted church in the world, that will signify much to convince others: we are too much parties to be believed in our own cause. There was a generation of men that cried, "The "temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord," as loud as we can cry, the church of England, the church of England: when yet by their sins they were pulling it down, and kindling that fire which consumed it. It will have a better grace to see others boast of our church, from what they observe in us, than for us to be crying it up with our words, when our deeds do decry it. Our enemies will make severe inferences from them; and our pretensions will be thought vain and impudent things, as long as our lives contradict them.

It was on design to raise in my self, and in others, a deep sense of the obligations that we lie under, of the duties of our functions; of the extent of them, and of the rewards that follow them; and to observe the proper methods of performing them, so as they may be of the greatest advantage both to our selves and others, that I have entred on these meditations. They have been for many years the chief subjects of my thoughts; if few have writ on them among us, yet we have St. Gregory Nazianzen's apologetic, St. Chrysostom's books of the priesthood, Gregory the Great's pastoral, and Bernard's book of consideration, among the ancients, and a very great number of excellent treatises, writ lately in France

upon them. I began my ſtudies in divinity with reading theſe, and I never yet grew weary of them; they raiſe ſo many noble deſigns, they offer ſuch ſchemes, and carry ſo much of unction and life in them, that I hope an imperfect eſſay this way may have ſome effect. For the ſearcher of hearts knows, I have no deſign in it, ſave this of ſtirring up, in my ſelf and others, 'The gift which 'was given by the impoſition of hands."

THE PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION OF THIS BOOK.

IT is above twenty years ſince this book was firſt publiſhed by me, and now that thoſe who have a concern in it think fit to reprint it, I thought it became me to review it carefully, to ſee if there was cauſe given to alter any part of it, or to add any thing to it.

I wrote it when I was newly put into the poſt in which by the providence of God I ſtill am. So that a longer courſe of experience and obſervation may have brought more things to my view than I could at that time reflect on.

I own this is my favourite book: which, if it has raiſed indignation in the minds of ſome, who are perhaps ſenſible that many things in it touch them in too tender a part; yet on the other hand it has brought me ſuch ſerious acknowledgments from many perſons, to me otherwiſe unknown but by their letters, of the benefit they received by it; that I humbly bleſs God

who made me an inſtrument in any ſort of promoting his glory, and edifying his church, by awakening the conſciences of ſo many clergymen to a better ſenſe of their duty, and to more diligence in the diſcharge of it.

I am now in the 70th year of my age, and as I cannot ſpeak long to the world in any ſort, ſo I cannot hope for a more ſolemn occaſion than this of ſpeaking with all due freedom both to the preſent and to the ſucceeding ages: Therefore I lay hold on it to give a free vent to thoſe ſad thoughts that lie on my mind both day and night, and are the ſubject of many ſecret mournings. I dare appeal to that God, to whom the ſecrets of my heart are known, and to whom I am ſhortly to give an account of my miniſtry, that I have the true intereſts of this church ever before my eyes, and that I purſue them with a ſincere and fervent zeal; if I am miſtaken in the methods I follow, God, to whom the integrity of my heart is known, will not lay that to my charge. I cannot look on, without the deepeſt concern, when I ſee imminent ruin hanging over this church, and by conſequence over the whole reformation. The outward ſtate of things is black enough, God knows; but that which heightens my fears riſes chiefly from the inward ſtate into which we are unhappily fallen. I will, in examining this, confine myſelf to that which is the ſubject of the following book; I mean the clergy.

Our Ember Weeks are the burden and grief of my life. The much greater part of thoſe who come to be ordain'd are ignorant to a degree, not to be apprehended by thoſe who are not obliged to know it. The eaſieſt part of knowledge is that to which they are the greateſt ſtrangers; I mean the plaineſt parts of the ſcriptures, which they ſay, in excuſe of their ignorance, that their tutors in the univerſities never mention the reading of to them; ſo that they can give no account, or at leaſt a very imperfect one, of the contents even of the goſpels. Thoſe who have read ſome few books, yet never ſeem to have read the ſcriptures. Many cannot give a tolerable account even of the catechiſm itſelf, how ſhort and plain ſoever. They cry and think it a ſad diſgrace to be denied orders, tho' the ignorance of ſome is ſuch, that in a well-regulated ſtate of things, they would appear not knowing enough to be admitted to the holy ſacrament.

This does often tear my heart. The caſe is not much better in many, who having got into orders come for inſtitution, and cannot make it appear that they have read the ſcriptures or any one good book ſince they were ordained; ſo that the ſmall meaſure of knowledge upon which they got into holy orders not being improved, is in a way to be quite loſt; and then they think it a great hardſhip if they are told, they muſt know the ſcriptures and the body of divinity better, before they can be truſted with a care of ſouls.

Theſe things pierce one's ſoul, and make him often cry out, "Oh that I had wings like a dove, for then would "I fly away and be at reſt!" What are we like to grow to? In what a caſe are we, to deal with any adverſary, Atheiſt, Papiſt, or Diſſenters, or in any ſort to promote the honour of God, and carry on the great concerns of the goſpel, when ſo groſs an ignorance in the fundamentals of religion has ſpread itſelf ſo much among thoſe who "ought to teach others," and yet need that one "teach them the firſt principles of the oracles of God?"

Politics and party eat out among us not only ſtudy and learning, but that which is the only thing that is more valuable, a true ſenſe of religion, with a ſincere zeal in advancing that for which the Son of God both lived and died, and to which thoſe who are received into holy orders have vowed to dedicate their lives and labours. Clamours of ſcandal in any of the clergy are not frequent, it is true, and God be thanked for it: but a remiſs unthinking courſe of life, with little or no application to ſtudy, and the bare performing of that, which, if not done, would draw cenſures when complained of, without ever purſuing the duties of the paſtoral care in any ſuitable degree, is but too common, as well as too evident.

But if there is too viſible a coldneſs among us, in that which requires our greateſt heat and zeal; there is a great deal of flaming heat about matters, in which

more gentleneſs and a milder temper would both look better, and more effectually compaſs that which is deſigned by it; I mean the bringing the diſſenters into our communion. Bitter railings, and a rough behaviour, cannot make many converts. To ſtudy the grounds of their ſeparation thoroughly, to anſwer them calmly and ſolidly, and to treat their perſons with all gentleneſs, expreſſing no uneaſineſs at the liberty granted them by law, is a method that will never fail of ſucceeding to a great degree, eſpecially on the riſing generation. Other methods do confirm their prejudices, and heighten their averſion to thoſe who treat them as enemies on deſign to ruin them, and not as friends on deſign to gain them.

God be thanked we are delivered from a remnant of Popery, that ſtuck too long to us, I mean perſecution for conſcience ſake: For the breaches on a man's liberty or goods are as really a perſecution, as that which ſtrikes at his perſon. They may be in ſome inſtances more uneaſy; as a ſingle death is not ſo formidable, as to be forced to live under great neceſſities, perhaps with a numerous family. And if we judge of this matter by our Saviour's rule, "of doing to others "what we would have others do to us," our conſciences would ſoon decide the queſtion: If we will but honeſtly aſk ourſelves how we would have thoſe of another religion deal with us, if we were living in countries where we muſt depart from the legal eſtabliſh-

ment, if we do truly follow the dictates of our conſcience. But if our zeal in point of conformity ſeems too ſtrong, there is no great reaſon to ſuſpect many of much zeal, with relation to Popery, tho' that is our ſtanding enemy, perpetually employed in working our ruin, with many hands and much heat; while we ſeem to be in a ſtate of indolence and inſenſibility on that ſide, as if there was no danger from thence. When at any time we are in a fright, we are apt to cry out; but that is no ſooner over, than we are in no apprehenſions of any further danger. And to their great comfort, we have found out a new diviſion to add to thoſe we laboured under before; which we know they managed very dextrouſly for their own ends; ſhifting ſides as a turn was to be ſerved by it: But now the mine is more ſucceſsfully played, ſince not only the breach between us and Diſſenters is very artfully widened, but we are unhappily broken among ourſelves, and under the names of High and Low Church, there is a new ſcene opened for jealouſy and animoſity, which has been managed with ſuch art and ſucceſs, that bodies of men owning the ſame religion and worſhip, and the ſame government both in temporals and ſpirituals, are yet as much alienated from one another, if not more, than if their differences were ever ſo great and viſible.

I will ſay nothing that may juſtly provoke any; but ſince I myſelf am ranked among the Low Church-men, I will open all that I know that is particular to them,

and then leave it to others to judge what reaſon can be given for entertaining ſuch hard thoughts of them.

They are cordially and conſcientiouſly zealous for the church, as eſtabliſhed by law: but yet they think no human conſtitution is ſo perfect, but that it may be made better, and that the church would be both more ſecure and more unexceptionable, if the adminiſtration of the diſcipline were put into other hands, and in a better method. They lay the foundation of all that they believe in the Chriſtian religion in the ſcriptures: Theſe and theſe only are the meaſures and ſtandard of their faith. No great names nor ſhews of authority over-awe them: they ſearch the ſcriptures, there they ſeek and find their faith.

They think that in matters declared to be indifferent, no harm could follow on it, if ſome regard were had to the ſcruples of thoſe who divide from us, in order to the fortifying the whole by uniting us among ourſelves: But till that can be done, they think a kind deportment towards Diſſenters ſoftens their prejudices, and diſpoſes them to hearken to the reaſons which they offer to them, with all the force they can, but without the aſperity of words, or a contemptuous behaviour; in which they have ſucceeded ſo well, that they ſee no cauſe to change their conduct.

They do indeed make a great difference between Diſſenters and Papiſts: They conſider the one as a handful of people true to the Proteſtant religion, and

to our national intereſts, not capable of doing us much miſchief, and who are, as far as appears to them, contented with their toleration, and are only deſirous to ſecure and maintain it. They have another and a very different opinion of Popery: They conſider that church, not only with relation to the many opinions and practices held by them; ſuch as tranſubſtantiation, purgatory, and the worſhipping ſaints and images, and a great many more: they are perſuaded that theſe are falſe and ill grounded, but they could eaſily bear with them, as they do with other errors: But they conſider Popery as a conſpiracy againſt the liberty and peace of mankind, on deſign to engroſs the wealth of the world into their own hands; and to deſtroy all that ſtand in their way, ſticking at no practice, how falſe, baſe, or cruel ſoever, that can advance this. This is the true ground of their zeal againſt Popery, and indeed againſt every thing that has a tendency that way.

The pretending to an independency of the church on the ſtate, is not only in their opinion a plain attack made on the ſupremacy, veſted by law in the crown, and a caſting a diſgrace on our reformers, and on every ſtep made in the reformation, which are openly owned by the chief promoters of this new conceit: But it is a direct oppoſition to the famed place, ſo much ſtretched by the ſame perſons to ſerve other purpoſes, in the 13th of the Romans, "Let every ſoul be ſubject to the "higher powers;" in which all ſubjects are equally

comprehended. The laws of God are certainly of a ſuperior obligation to any human authority; but where theſe laws are ſilent, certainly all ſubjects of what ſort ſoever, are bound to obey the laws of the land where they live.

The raiſing the power and authority of ſacred functions beyond what is founded on clear warrants in ſcripture, is, they think, the readieſt way to give the world ſuch a jealouſy of them, and ſuch an averſion to them, as may make them loſe the authority that they ought to have, while they pretend to that they have not.

They dare not unchurch all the bodies of the Proteſtants beyond ſea; nor deny to our Diſſenters at home, the federal rights common to all Chriſtians, or leave them to uncovenanted mercy. They do not annul their baptiſms, or think that they ought to be baptized again in a more regular manner, before they can be accounted Chriſtians. They know of no power in a Prieſt to pardon ſin, other than the declaring the goſpel-pardon, upon the conditions on which it is offered. They know of no ſacrifice in the euchariſt, other than the commemorating that on the croſs, with the oblation of the prayers, praiſes, and alms-giving, preſcribed in the office. They are far from condemning private judgment in matters of religion: This ſtrikes at the root of the whole reformation, which could never have been compaſſed, if private men have not a right to

judge for themſelves; on the contrary, they think every man is bound to judge for himſelf, which indeed he ought to do, in the fear of God, and with all humility and caution. They look on all theſe notions as ſteps towards Popery; tho' they do not conclude, that all thoſe who have made them, deſigned that by ſo doing.

This is a ſhort account of the Low Church-mens notions, with relation to matters of religion among us. As to our temporal concerns, they think all that obedience and ſubmiſſion that is ſettled by our laws, to the perſons of our Princes, ought to be paid them for conſcience ſake: But if a miſguided Prince ſhall take on him to diſſolve our conſtitution, and to ſubject the laws to his pleaſure, they think that if God offers a remedy, it is to be received with all thankfulneſs. For theſe reaſons they rejoiced in the Revolution, and continue faithful and true to the ſettlement then made, and to the ſubſequent ſettlements. They think there is a full power in the legiſlature to ſettle the crown, and to ſecure the nations: and ſo they have taken the oaths enjoined with a good conſcience, and with fixed reſolutions of adhering firmly to them, without any other views but ſuch as the laws and the oaths purſuant to them do direct. They know of no unalterable or indefeaſible right, but what is founded on the law.

This is their fixed principle; and they are the more fixed in this, when they remember that a Prince educated among us, and ſingularly obliged by the zeal our

church expreſſed for his advancement to the throne, upon which he made great acknowledgments and promiſes, and who by his temper ſeemed as much inclined to keep them as his religion could admit of; yet upon his elevation did ſo intirely forget all this, that he ſeemed peculiarly ſharpened againſt thoſe who of all others had the leaſt reaſon to have expected it from him.

This was notorious and evident in the father: What then can be expected from him who calls himſelf his ſon, who has had his breeding in an abſolute government, where Proteſtants are perſecuted with an unrelenting cruelty, and who has been obliged to wander ſo long beyond ſea, and ſtands attainted and abjured here, and is loaded with other indignities; but that as his religion is ſtill the ſame cruel and bloody conſpiracy againſt Proteſtants that it was, ſo it muſt have its full ſwing in one ſharpened by ſo much provocation.

It bewrays a monſtrous ignorance of the principles and maxims, as well as of the hiſtory of Popery, to imagine that they can ever depart from the deſign of extirpating heretics ſettled by ſo much authority, held ſacred by them. Every look in the Low Church-man towards a Popiſh pretender, is to him both perjury and treaſon.

I have thus freely opened all that I know of the principles of thoſe called the Low Church-men among us, I will not pretend to tell what are the principles of

thoſe called the High Church-men; I know them too little to pretend to tell what their maxims and views are. I will with great joy own my miſtakes and miſapprehenſions of any of them, who, upon this candid avowing what the Low Church-men hold, will come to have juſter and more charitable thoughts of them; and upon that will concur with them in ſuch meaſures and counſels as may yet give us ſome hope, if that is not now too late, or may be at leaſt an abatement of our miſery, if not a reprieve from it. I unwillingly mention a long diſappointing among us as to convocation-matters.

I will avoid ſaying any thing that may give a new irritation, my deſign being to do all I can to heal our breaches. I will not enter into the merits of the cauſe further, than to obſerve that the Biſhops have begun no new practices, but go in the ſteps in which their predeceſſors went, without varying from their practices in a tittle: They find themſelves bound down to the methods they adhere to, by ſuch a ſeries of precedents, that unleſs the legiſlature interpoſes, they think they cannot alter them. They have made no new attempts, nor have they invaded any rights of which they found the clergy in poſſeſſion. And what is there in all this to occaſion ſuch tragical out-cries; and to engage ſo many of the bodies of the clergy into jealouſies of their Biſhops, and into combinations againſt them, as if they were betraying the church and its liberties?

'Tis true, many of us oppoſed the *Occaſional Bill*, from which ſuch great things were expected. We thought there were ill deſigns under it; we thought it ill-timed; we looked on it as tending to a breach on the toleration: And now, that the bill is paſt without any oppoſition, we hear of no great effects it has had; nor are jealouſies extinguiſhed; the chief promoters of it are ſcarce thanked for it. But ſince we are ſo openly attacked, and as it were expoſed to the inſults and fury of diſtracted multitudes, we may be pardoned, if we venture on ſomewhat like an imitation of what the great Apoſtle writ upon a like occaſion, calling it indeed a folly, for it will paſs for ſuch with inveterate and inflamed ſpirits. What have other Biſhops done to expreſs their zeal for the church, and their fidelity to their vows, and to what became their character and ſtation, that we have not done? Have we not lived ſo that we may ſay "Ye are witneſſes?" And, which is more, "God "alſo, how holily, juſtly and unblameably we have be-"haved ourſelves among you?" How ready have we been both to aſſiſt and ſupport you? How conſtant have we been preaching in ſeaſon, and out of ſeaſon, opening the whole counſels of God to the flock committed to our charge? How careful are we in examining and inſtructing thoſe who come to us for orders and inſtitutions? How frequent in confirming, and in the other duties belonging to our function? So that we may ſay, What have we done, or what have we left undone to

merit the unkind returns we meet with? What reaſon have we given to the world by our manner of living, to think we had our poſts only for the advantages we reap by them, and that we do it even againſt our conſciences, and are only waiting an opportunity to betray them?

This is ſuch a pitch both of impiety and baſeneſs, that few of the worſt ſort of libertines are capable of it; and yet how oft have we been charged with it? If this had come only from the enemies of our preſent conſtitution, on deſign to deſtroy the reputation to which we hope we have ſome right, it was what we might expect from active and indigent writers, who are looking for another face of things, hoping then to be enriched by our ſpoils. But that thoſe who have taken all the oaths enjoined by law, and who daily concur in all the public devotions, ſhould entertain and ſpread ſuch calumnies, and act as the under-workmen to thoſe who ſeek our ruin, is that which deſerves the ſevereſt cenſures.

Great regard is indeed due to ſuch as avow their principles, and act according to them; eſpecially when they are loſers and ſufferers by it; even their paſſions and frailties are to be lamented and gently cenſured. But the impiety of mens taking oaths againſt their conſciences, and, in hope to compenſate for that, their acting contrary to them, is of ſo monſtrous a nature, that

our language does not afford words black enough to ſet out its deformity.

We are ſoon to go off the ſtage, to a region of peace and love, where malice and envy cannot follow us; he to whom our integrity is known, will pardon all our frailties, and even all our omiſſions, and will deal with us according to our ſincere endeavours; from whoſe hands we may expect to receive the more entire reward, the leſs of it that we receive from men.

Our late bleſſed Primate was perſecuted by malice to his grave; and that has followed him ever ſince he was laid in the duſt. His great concern at thoſe black efforts of malice, that he was purſued with, was, becauſe he ſaw they ſtood in the way to defeat all the good deſigns with which his mind laboured. It is true, that retirement to which his high poſt led him, he never embarking in deſigns that he thought foreign to it, gave him leiſure to review and retouch the nobleſt body of ſermons that, I hope I may be allowed to ſay, this nation, or the world ever ſaw; which I mention the rather here, becauſe they have been publiſhed ſince this book was firſt printed.

His chief ſupport next to his own conſcience, and his confidence in God, was from our late bleſſed Queen; who was inceſſantly employed in poſſeſſing her mind with the beſt ſchemes that were either laid before her by others, or ſuggeſted to her by her own royal heart, for correcting every thing that was amiſs, and improv-

ing every thing that wanted finiſhing among us. And ſhe was waiting for a happy peace to ſet about the executing them: She had arrived at ſuch a ſuperior degree of knowledge, and had ſuch a force of reaſoning, with an irreſiſtable ſweetneſs of temper, that if our ſins had not provoked God to blaſt all thoſe hopes, by her early admiſſion to a better crown, we might have ſeen a glorious face put on our church with relation to all its concerns.

I am in ſome ſort obliged to mention her, becauſe I writ this book by her order, as well as by our Primate's, as an attempt to prepare the ſcene to many noble deſigns, which may be opened at ſome time or other, if ever we are ſo happy as to endeavour to carry on our conſtitution to perfection; which in our preſent diſtracted, if not deſperate ſtate, is far out of view, and therefore muſt be reſerved to a more proper occaſion.

But to return to the ſad view of our diſtractions at home: The Biſhops who find themſelves ſo unjuſtly cenſur'd, and their deſigns ſo unhappily obſtructed, ought to humble themſelves before God; for it is meet to be ſaid to him, "I have born chaſtiſement, that "which I know not teach thou me." They ought to examine and conſider how far their other ſins may have provoked God to deny his bleſſing to their beſt endeavours; they ought to aſk themſelves, what they have done to render them unworthy to build up the houſe of God, and to repair its breaches; they ought to mourn

in ſecret, both for their own ſins, and for the ſins of thoſe who ſet themſelves againſt them. They ought to ſearch and try their own hearts, to find out if their pride or vanity, their love of eaſe and pleaſure, or any other ſecret ſin is at root, and defeats all their labours; they ought to pray more earneſtly both for themſelves and their families, for their clergy and their people; and in ſo doing they may hope either to draw down a bleſſing from Heaven on all that they ſet about; or at leaſt that their prayers ſhall return into their own boſom.

They ought alſo to cry mightily to God, that if they are to have a ſhare in the fiery trial, they may be ſo ſtrengthened in the inner man, that they may by no unbecoming practices decline or avoid it; but may rejoice if they are called to ſuffer for the name of Chriſt, and to ſeal that doctrine, which they have ſo long preached, with their blood; and ſo may glorify him by their "patient continuance in well doing," till they receive their crown. This will be thro' the bleſſing of God an effectual mean, either to diſſipate the clouds that ſeem to gather, and are ready to break out into a ſtorm and horrible tempeſt, or to procure ſuch a meaſure of divine aſſiſtances to them in their ſufferings, as may make their blood a ſeed for a noble ſpring of a better ſtate of things among us. If with Biſhops ſo employing their time, many both of their clergy and laity did concur in lying in the duſt before God, and turning

ing every thing that wanted finiſhing among us. And ſhe was waiting for a happy peace to ſet about the executing them: She had arrived at ſuch a ſuperior degree of knowledge, and had ſuch a force of reaſoning, with an irreſiſtable ſweetneſs of temper, that if our ſins had not provoked God to blaſt all thoſe hopes, by her early admiſſion to a better crown, we might have ſeen a glorious face put on our church with relation to all its concerns.

I am in ſome ſort obliged to mention her, becauſe I writ this book by her order, as well as by our Primate's, as an attempt to prepare the ſcene to many noble deſigns, which may be opened at ſome time or other, if ever we are ſo happy as to endeavour to carry on our conſtitution to perfection; which in our preſent diſtracted, if not deſperate ſtate, is far out of view, and therefore muſt be reſerved to a more proper occaſion.

But to return to the ſad view of our diſtractions at home: The Biſhops who find themſelves ſo unjuſtly cenſur'd, and their deſigns ſo unhappily obſtructed, ought to humble themſelves before God; for it is meet to be ſaid to him, "I have born chaſtiſement, that "which I know not teach thou me." They ought to examine and conſider how far their other ſins may have provoked God to deny his bleſſing to their beſt endeavours; they ought to aſk themſelves, what they have done to render them unworthy to build up the houſe of God, and to repair its breaches; they ought to mourn

in ſecret, both for their own ſins, and for the ſins of thoſe who ſet themſelves againſt them. They ought to ſearch and try their own hearts, to find out if their pride or vanity, their love of eaſe and pleaſure, or any other ſecret ſin is at root, and defeats all their labours; they ought to pray more earneſtly both for themſelves and their families, for their clergy and their people; and in ſo doing they may hope either to draw down a bleſſing from Heaven on all that they ſet about; or at leaſt that their prayers ſhall return into their own boſom.

They ought alſo to cry mightily to God, that if they are to have a ſhare in the fiery trial, they may be ſo ſtrengthened in the inner man, that they may by no unbecoming practices decline or avoid it; but may rejoice if they are called to ſuffer for the name of Chriſt, and to ſeal that doctrine, which they have ſo long preached, with their blood; and ſo may glorify him by their "patient continuance in well doing," till they receive their crown. This will be thro' the bleſſing of God an effectual mean, either to diſſipate the clouds that ſeem to gather, and are ready to break out into a ſtorm and horrible tempeſt, or to procure ſuch a meaſure of divine aſſiſtances to them in their ſufferings, as may make their blood a ſeed for a noble ſpring of a better ſtate of things among us. If with Biſhops ſo employing their time, many both of their clergy and laity did concur in lying in the duſt before God, and turning

to him with their whole hearts, we might hope to ſee better times, than we have now in view. God has often delivered us, when we were near the laſt extremities; we have ſeen in our own time, ſuch a chain of kind providences happily interpoſing, when we ſaw no reaſonable proſpect, that we ought not to give all for loſt, how dark ſoever the face of things may look, if we bring ourſelves to ſuch a ſtate, that we may have ſtill a right to hope for the like protection.

It cannot be denied but the appearance is formidable, when we ſee that Prince who has engaged the longeſt and the deepeſt in the deſign of extirpating our religion, get out of all his troubles, and accompliſh his vaſt deſigns, that ſeemed once to be ſo blaſted, that they could not be retrieved; another ſcene is now opening to him that promiſes all he can wiſh for, and muſt bring ſuch an accumulation of power and treaſure to him, that humanly ſpeaking, nothing can ſtand in his way. When a great alliance is once quite diſſolved, and when a word ſo often broken, and edicts ſo often violated, are truſted to and relied on; ſuch an unexpected turn will no doubt be conſtru'd as a reward from Heaven for his zeal againſt hereſy: and may very probably encourage him to finiſh what he has done at home, by bringing us under the ſame calamity.

We know what engagement he lies under to a dying prince; but we cannot know how far his bigotry may even out-do theſe, when he finds himſelf at the height

of power and wealth that he is almoſt poſſeſſed of: promiſes and oaths can work but feebly on one ſo accuſtomed to break through them.

When not only diſpenſations, but ſolicitations from Rome, with the practices of a confeſſor, the view of that glory that the work muſt bring him on earth, with the imaginary view of a more eternal weight of glory in heaven, concur; what may not be apprehended from thence? chiefly when ſuch of that religion, whoſe intereſts obliged them hitherto to join in preſerving us, ſeeing theſe all abandoned and blaſted, may either be at beſt indifferent ſpectators, or the bigotry that ſurrounds them may be quickened, by a deſire of revenging what they will call the giving them up, to concur in compleating our ruin; which in ſuch a ſtate of things cannot reaſonably be thought to be far from us. Beſides, if an avowed departing from the ſacred ties of *treaties* and *alliances* is once openly practiſed, it may prove a fatal precedent. Such maxims are catching and contagious. The woe denounced by the Prophet againſt thoſe "that deal treacherouſly when they are "not dealt treacherouſly with, that when they ſhall "make an end to deal treacherouſly they ſhall be dealt "treacherouſly with," may come heavily with a face of retribution, and without pity.

Upon the whole matter, that I may bring this diſcourſe to a concluſion; as our diſunion does not only weaken us, but diverts us from that which ought to be

our main concern, to the unhappy conſequences that follow formed parties; ſo if we will not take warning from our Saviour's words, "That a city or kingdom "divided againſt itſelf cannot ſtand, but muſt come to "an end;" we have reaſon to apprehend that ſuch a breach, even without the advantage that an enemy may make of it, will be fatal; while by our "devouring "one another, we may come to be conſumed of one "another:" But how much more certain will this be, if we have a watchful and powerful enemy ſo near us? to whom we may juſtly apply the character given of the evil ſpirit, that he "goes about as a roaring lion, ſeek-"ing whom he may devour." But even our union, tho' it may fortify us in the methods of human policy, yet it will not ſignify much, unleſs we do unite in order to our applying ourſelves to the great duties of our profeſſion; ſo as to ſecure the favour and protection of Heaven. We ought not to hope that if we continue ſtill in our ſins, and in our ſecurity, ſaying with the Jews, "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the "Lord!" or in the modern ſtile, "the church, the "church!" we ſhall not at laſt fall under the ſevereſt of all judgments denounced by St. Paul againſt the unbelieving Jews, in the words of Iſaiah, "Go unto this "people and ſay, Hearing ye ſhall hear, and ſhall not "underſtand; and ſeeing ye ſhall ſee, and ſhall not "perceive; for the heart of this people is waxed groſs, "and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes

" have they cloſed, leaſt they ſhould ſee with their " eyes, and hear with their ears, and underſtand with " their hearts, and ſhould be converted, and I ſhould " heal them."

To avert all this, let us, the Prieſts and Miniſters of the Lord, weep before him, and ſay, " Spare thy " people, O Lord, and give not thy heritage to re- " proach, that the heathen (or idolaters) ſhould rule " over them. Wherefore ſhould they ſay among the " people, where is their God," where is their church, where is their reformation? In theſe exerciſes I deſire to employ many of my own hours; and to theſe I invite all who have a true zeal for God and his church.

Salisbury the 15th of
November, 1712.

GI. SARUM.

THE

CONTENTS.

CHAP. I. *OF the dignity of ſacred employments, and the names and deſignations given to them in ſcripture.* Page 1

CHAP. II. *Of the rules ſet down in ſcripture for thoſe that miniſter in holy things, and of the corruptions that are ſet forth in them.* 12

CHAP. III. *Paſſages out of the New Teſtament relating to the ſame matter.* 22

CHAP. IV. *Of the ſenſe of the primitive church in this matter.* 43

CHAP. V. *An account of ſome canons in divers ages of the church, relating to the duties and labours of the clergy.* 66

CHAP. VI. *Of the declared ſenſe and rules of the church of England in this matter.* 80

CHAP. VII. *Of the due preparation of ſuch as may, and ought to be put in orders.* 107

CHAP. VIII. *Of the functions and labours of clergymen.* 134

CHAP. IX. *Concerning preaching.* 162

The concluſion. 183

CHAP. X. *Of preſentation to benefices and ſimony.* 191

OF THE

PASTORAL CARE.

CHAP. I.

Of the dignity of ſacred employments, and the names and deſignations given to them in ſcripture.

HOW low ſoever the eſteem of the clergy may be ſunk in a profane and corrupt age, and how much ſoever the errors and diſorders of clergy-men may have contributed to bring this, not only upon themſelves, but upon others who deſerve better, but are unhappy in being mixed with ſo much ill company; yet certainly if we either conſider the nature of things in themſelves, or the value that is ſet on that profeſſion, in the ſcriptures, it will appear that it ought to be conſidered at another rate than it is. As much as the ſoul is better than the body, and as much as the purifying and perfecting the ſoul is preferable to all thoſe mechanical employments which relate to the body, and as much as eternity is more valuable than this ſhort and tranſitory life; ſo much does this employment excel all others.

A clergy-man, by his character and deſign of life, ought to be a man ſeparated from the cares and concerns of this world, and dedicated to the ſtudy and meditation of divine matters. Whoſe converſation ought

to be a pattern for others; a conſtant preaching to his people: who ought to offer up the prayers of the people in their name, and as their mouth to God: who ought to be praying and interceding for them in ſecret, as well as officiating among them in public: who ought to be diſtributing among them the bread of life, the word of God; and to be diſpenſing among them the ſacred rites, which are the badges, the union, and the ſupports of Chriſtians. He ought to admoniſh, to reprove, and to comfort them, not only by his general doctrine in his ſermons, but from houſe to houſe; that ſo he may do theſe things more home and effectually, than can be done from the pulpit. He is to watch over their ſouls, to keep them from error, and to alarm them out of their ſins, by giving them warning of the judgments of God; to viſit the ſick, and to prepare them for the judgment and life to come.

This is the function of a clergy-man; who, that he may perform all theſe duties with more advantage, and better effect, ought to behave himſelf ſo well, that his own converſation may not only be without offence, but be ſo exemplary, that his people may have reaſon to conclude, that he himſelf does firmly believe all thoſe things which he propoſes to them; that he thinks himſelf bound to follow all thoſe rules that he ſets them; and that they may ſee ſuch a ſerious ſpirit of devotion in him, that from thence they may be induced to believe, that his chief deſign among them, is to do them

good, and to ſave their ſouls; which may prepare them ſo to eſteem and love him, that they may not be prejudiced againſt any thing that he does and ſays in public, by any thing that they obſerve in himſelf in ſecret. He muſt alſo be employing himſelf ſo well in his private ſtudies, that from thence he may be furniſhed with ſuch a variety of lively thoughts, divine meditations, and proper and noble expreſſions, as may enable him to diſcharge every part of his duty, in ſuch a manner, as may raiſe not ſo much his own reputation, as the credit of his function, and of the great meſſage of reconciliation that is committed to his charge: above all ſtudies, he ought to apply himſelf to underſtand the holy ſcriptures aright; to have his memory well furniſhed that way, that ſo upon all occaſions, he may be able to enforce what he ſays out of them, and ſo be an able miniſter of the New Teſtament.

This is in ſhort the character of a true clergyman, which is to be more fully opened and enlarged on in the following parts of this book. All this looks ſo great and ſo noble, that it does not appear neceſſary to raiſe it, or to inſiſt on it more fully. Indeed it ſpeaks its own dignity ſo ſenſibly, that none will diſpute it, but ſuch as are open enemies to all religion in general; or to the Chriſtian religion in particular; and yet even few of theſe, are ſo entirely corrupted, as not to wiſh that external order and policy were kept up among men, for reſtraining the injuſtice

and violence of unruly appetites and paſſions; which few, even of the tribe of the libertines, ſeem to deſire to be let looſe; ſince the peace and ſafety of mankind, require that the world be kept in method, and under ſome yoke.

It will be more ſuitable to my deſign, to ſhew how well this character agrees with that which is laid down in the ſcriptures concerning theſe offices. I ſhall begin firſt with the names, and then go on to the deſcriptions, and laſtly proceed to the rules that we find in them.

The name of Deacon that is now appropriated to the loweſt office in the church, was, in the time that the New Teſtament was writ, uſed more promiſcuouſly: for the Apoſtles, the Evangeliſts, and thoſe whom the Apoſtles ſent to viſit the churches, are all called by this name. Generally in all thoſe places where the word Miniſter is in our tranſlation, it is Deacon in the Greek, which ſignifies properly a Servant, or one who labours for another. Such perſons are dedicated to the immediate ſervice of God; and are appropriated to the offices and duties of the church; ſo this term both expreſſes the dignity and the labour of the employment.

The next order carries now the name of Preſbyter, or Elder; which tho' at firſt it was applied not only to Biſhops, but to the Apoſtles themſelves; yet in the ſucceeding ages, it came to be appropriated to the ſecond rank of the officers in the church. It either ſignifies a ſeniority of Age, or of Chriſtianity, in oppoſition to a

Neophyte or Novice, one newly converted to the faith; but, as by common practice, Senate or Senator, being at firſt given to counſellors by reaſon of their age, came afterwards to be a title appropriate to them; ſo the title Preſbyter (altered in pronunciation to be in Engliſh, Prieſt) or Elder, being a character of reſpect, denotes the dignity of thoſe to whom it belongs; but ſince St. Paul divides this title either into two different ranks, or into two different performances of the duties of the ſame rank, thoſe "that * rule well," and "thoſe that labour in word and doctrine;" this is a title that ſpeaks both the dignity, and likewiſe the duty belonging to this function.

The title which is now by the cuſtom of many ages given to the higheſt function in the church, of Biſhop, or Inſpector, and Overſeer, as it imports a dignity in him, as the chief of thoſe who labour, ſo it does likewiſe expreſs his obligation to care and diligence, both in obſerving, and overſeeing the whole flock, and more ſpecially in inſpecting the deportment and labours of his fellow workmen, who are ſubordinate to him in the conſtitution of the church, yet ought to be eſteemed by him, in imitation of the Apoſtles, his brethren, his fellow labourers, and fellow ſervants. Next to the names of the ſacred functions, I ſhall conſider the other deſignations and figures, made uſe of to expreſs them.

The moſt common is that of Paſtor or Shepherd. It

* 1 Tim. v. 17.

is to be remembred, that in the firſt ſimplicity of mankind for many ages, men looked after their own cattle, or employed their children in it; and when they truſted that care to any other, it was no ſmall ſign of their confidence, according to what Jacob ſaid to Laban. The care of a good Shepherd was a figure then ſo well underſtood, that the prophet expreſſes God's care of his people, by this, * "of his feeding them as a Shepherd, carrying his lambs in his boſom, and gently leading them that were with young." Chriſt alſo calls himſelf † "the Good Shepherd, that knew his ſheep, and did not as a hireling, fly away when the wolf came, but laid down his life for his ſheep." This then being ſo often made uſe of in both Teſtaments, is an expreſſion of the great truſt committed to the clergy, which likewiſe ſuppoſes a great, a conſtant, and a tender care in looking to, in feeding or inſtructing, in watching over, and guarding the flock againſt errors and ſins, and their being ready to offer themſelves to the firſt fury of perſecution.

The title of Stewards, or Diſpenſers, which is the moſt honourable in a houſhold, is alſo given to them. Theſe aſſign to every one his due ſhare, both of labour and of proviſion; theſe watch over them, and have the care and order of the other ſervants aſſigned to them. So in this great family, of which Chriſt is the head, the ‡ Stewards are not only in a poſt of great dignity, but

* Iſa. xl. 11. † John x. 11. ‡ 1 Cor. iv. 1, 2.

alſo of much labour: they ought to be obſerving the reſt of this houſhold, that they may be faithful in the diſtribution, and ſo encourage, admoniſh, reprove or cenſure, as there is occaſion for it.

They are alſo called Ambaſſadors, and this upon the nobleſt and moſt deſirable meſſage; for their buſineſs is to treat of peace between God and man; to them is given the word or doctrine of reconciliation; they are ſent by Chriſt, and do ſpeak in God's name; as if * "God did beſeech men by "them; ſo do they in Chriſt's ſtead," who is the Mediator, "preſs men to be reconciled to God;" words of a very high ſound, of great truſt and dignity, but which import likewiſe great obligations. An Ambaſſador is very ſolicitous to maintain the dignity of his character, and his maſter's honour; and chiefly to carry on that which is the main buſineſs that he is ſent upon, which he is always contriving how to promote: ſo if the honour of this title affects us as it ought to do, with a juſt value for it, we ought at the ſame time to conſider the obligations that accompany it, of living ſuitable to it, anſwering in ſome ſort, the dignity and majeſty of "the King of kings," that has committed it to us; and of labouring with all poſſible diligence, to effectuate the great deſign on which we are ſent; the reconciling ſinners to God: the work having in itſelf a proportion to the dignity of him that employs us in it.

* 2 Cor. v. 19, 20.

Another, and yet a more glorious title, is that of Angels, who as they are of a pure and ſublime nature, and are called a * "flaming fire, ſo they do always be- "hold the face of our heavenly Father, and ever do his "will," and are alſo "miniſtring ſpirits, ſent forth to "miniſter to them that are appointed to be the heirs of "ſalvation:" this title is given to Biſhops and Paſtors; and as if that were not enough, they are in one place called not only the Meſſengers or † "Angels of the churches," but alſo "the glory of Chriſt." The natural importance of this is, that men to whom this title is applied, ought to imitate thoſe heavenly powers, in the elevation of their ſouls, to contemplate the works and glory of God, and in their conſtant "doing his "will," more particularly in miniſtring to the ſouls of thoſe, for whom the great Angel of the Covenant made himſelf a ſacrifice.

I do not among theſe titles reckon thoſe of Rulers or Governors, ‡ that are alſo given to Biſhops, becauſe they ſeem to be but another name for Biſhops, whoſe inſpection was a rule and government, and ſo carried, in its ſignification, both authority and labour. To theſe deſignations that carry in them characters of honour, but of honour joined to labour; and for the ſake of which the honour was due, according to that, "eſteem them very high- "ly for their work's ſake;" I ſhall add ſome other deſignations, that in their ſignifications carry only labour

*Rev. i. 20. † 2 Cor. viii. 23. ‡ Heb. xiii. 7. 17.

without honour, being borrowed from labours that are hard, but no way honourable.

They are often called Watchmen*, who uſed to ſtand on high towers, and were to give the alarm, as they ſaw occaſion for it: theſe men were obliged to a conſtant attendance, to watch in the night, as well as in the day: ſo all this being applied to the clergy, imports that they ought to be upon their watch-tower, obſerving what dangers their people are expoſed to, either by their ſins, which provoke the judgments of God; or by the deſigns of their enemies; they ought not by a falſe reſpect, to ſuffer them to ſleep and periſh in their ſins; but muſt denounce the judgments of God to them, and rather incur their diſpleaſure by their freedom, than ſuffer them to periſh in their ſecurity.

St. Paul does alſo call church-men by the name of Builders, and gives to the Apoſtles the title of Maſter-builders†; this imports both hard and painful labour, and likewiſe great care and exactneſs in it, for want of which the building will be not only expoſed to the injuries of weather, but will quickly tumble down; and it gives us to underſtand, that thoſe who carry this title, ought to ſtudy well the great rule, by which they muſt carry on the intereſt of religion, that ſo they may "build up their people in their moſt holy faith," ſo "as to be a "building fitly framed together."

* Ezek. iii. 17. † 1 Cor. iii. 10.

They are alſo called "Labourers in God's huſband-"ry, labourers in his vineyard, and harveſt*," who are to ſow, plant, and water, and to cultivate the ſoil of the church. This imports a continual return of daily and hard labour, which requires both pain and diligence. They are alſo called Soldiers, men that did war and fight againſt the "powers of darkneſs.†" The fatigue, the dangers and difficulties of that ſtate of life, are ſo well underſtood, that no application is neceſſary to make them more ſenſible.

And thus by a particular enumeration of either the more ſpecial names of theſe offices, ſuch as Deacon, Prieſt and Biſhop, Ruler and Governor, or of the deſignations given to them of Shepherds or Paſtors, Stewards, Ambaſſadors, and Angels, it appears that there is a great dignity belonging to them, but a dignity which muſt carry labour with it, as that for which the honour is due: the other titles of Watchmen, Builders, Labourers and Soldiers, import alſo that they are to decline no part of their duty, for the labour that is in it, the dangers that may follow, or the ſeeming meanneſs that may be in it, ſince we have for this ſo great a rule and pattern ſet us by our Saviour, who has given us this character of himſelf, and in that a rule to all that pretend to come after him, ‡ "The Son "of Man came not to be miniſtred unto, but to mi-

* 1 Cor. iii. 9. Matth. xx. 1. Matth. ix. 37, 38. 1 Cor. iii. 6.

† Philip. ii. 25. ‡ St. Mat. xx. 28.

" niſter. This was ſaid upon the proud contentions that had been among his diſciples, who ſhould be the greateſt: two of them preſuming upon their near relation to him, and pretending to the firſt dignity in his kingdom: upon that he gave them to underſtand, that the dignities of his kingdom were not to be of the ſame nature with thoſe that were in the world. It was not rule or empire to which they were to pretend; " The diſciple was not to be above his Lord:" And he that humbled himſelf to be the laſt and loweſt in his ſervice, was by ſo doing, really the firſt.

He himſelf deſcended to the " waſhing his diſciples " feet*;" which he propoſeth to their imitation; and that came in latter ages to be taken up by princes, and acted by them in pageantry: but the plain account of that action, is, that it was a prophetical emblem; of which ſort we find ſeveral inſtances, both in Iſaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel: the prophet doing ſomewhat that had a myſtical ſignification in it, relating to the ſubject of his prophecy: ſo that our Saviour's waſhing the feet of his diſciples, imported the humility, and the deſcending to the meaneſt offices of charity, which he recommended to his followers, particularly to thoſe whom he appointed to preach his goſpel to the world.

* John xiii. 5.

CHAP. II.

Of the rules ſet down in ſcripture for thoſe that miniſter in holy things; and of the corruptions that are ſet forth in them.

I INTEND to write with all poſſible ſimplicity, without the affectation of a ſtrictneſs of method: and therefore I will give one full view of this whole matter, without any other order than as it lies in the ſcriptures: and will lay both the rules and the reproofs that are in them together, as things that give light to one another. In the law of Moſes we find many very particular rules given for the * waſhing and conſecration of the Prieſts and Levites, chiefly of the High Prieſt. The whole tribe of Levi was ſanctified and ſeparated from the common labours, either of war or tillage; and though they were but one in twelve, yet a tenth of all was appointed for them: they were alſo to have a large ſhare of another tenth; that ſo they might be not only delivered from all cares, by that large proviſion that was made for them, but might be able to relieve the neceſſities of the widows and fatherleſs, the poor and the ſtrangers that ſojourned among them; and by their bounty and charity, be poſſeſſed both of the love and eſteem of the people. They were "holy

* Levit. viii.

" to the Lord;" they were ſaid to be ſanctified or dedicated to God; and the head of their order carried on his mitre this inſcription, HOLINESS TO THE LORD. The many waſhings that they were often to uſe, chiefly in doing their functions, carried this ſignification in them, that they were appropriated to God, and that they were under very ſtrict obligations to a high degree of purity; they might not ſo much as mourn for their dead relations*, to ſhew how far they ought to riſe above all the concerns of "fleſh and blood," and even the moſt excuſable paſſions of human nature. But above all things, theſe rules taught them, with what exactneſs†, decency and purity they ought to perform thoſe offices that belonged to their function; and therefore when Aaron's two ſons, ‡ Nadab and Abihu tranſgreſſed the law that God had given, "fire came out from "the Lord, and devoured them;" and the reaſon given for it, carries in it a perpetual rule; * "I will be ſanc-"tified in all them that draw near to me, and before "all the people I will be glorified:" which import, that ſuch as miniſter in holy things, ought to behave themſelves ſo, that God's name may be glorified by their means; otherwiſe, that God will glorify himſelf by his ſevere judgments on them. A ſignal inſtance of which we do alſo find in Eli's two ſons‡, whoſe impieties and defilements, as they made the people to abhor

* Levit. xxi. 1. † Levit. xxii. 3, 4. ‡ Levit. x. 1.
* Levit. x. 3. ‡ 1 Sam. 2d and 3d ch.

" the offering of the Lord;" ſo they alſo drew down, not only heavy judgments on themſelves, but on the whole houſe of Eli; and indeed on the whole nation.

But beſides the attendance which the Prieſts and Levites were bound to give at the temple, and on the public ſervice there, they were likewiſe obliged to ſtudy the law, to give the people warning out of it, to inſtruct them in it, and to conduct them, and watch over them: and for this reaſon they had cities aſſigned them in all the corners of the land; that ſo they might both more eaſily obſerve the manners of the people, and that the people might more eaſily have recourſe to them. Now when that nation became corrupted both by idolatry and immorality, God raiſed up Prophets to be extraordinary monitors to them; to declare to them their ſins, and to denounce thoſe judgments which were coming upon them, becauſe of them; we find the ſilence, the ignorance, and the corruption of their Paſtors, their Shepherds, and their Watchmen, is a main article of their charge; ſo Iſaiah tells them, * that their " Watchmen were blind, ignorant, dumb dogs, " that could not bark; ſleeping, lying down, and " loving to ſlumber:" yet theſe careleſs Watchmen were covetous and inſatiable, " They were greedy " dogs, which could never have enough; Shep- " herds they were, that could not underſtand;" but how remiſs ſoever they might be in God's work,

* Iſa. lvi. 10.

they were careful enough of their own: "They all "looked to their own way, every one to his own gain "from his quarter." They were, no doubt, exact in levying their tythes and first-fruits, how little soever they might do for them, bating their bare attendance at the temple, to officiate there; so guilty they were of that reigning abuse, of thinking they had done their duty, if they either by themselves, or by proxy, had performed their functions, without minding what was incumbent on them, as Watchmen, or Shepherds. In opposition to such careless and corrupt guides, God promises to his people; "To set Watchmen over them "that should never hold their peace day nor night."

As the captivity drew nearer, we may easily conclude, that the corruptions both of Priest and People increased, which ripened them for the judgments of God, that were kept back by the reformations which Hezekiah and Josiah had made; but at last, all was so depraved, that though God sent two Prophets, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, to prepare them for that terrible calamity, yet this was only to save some few among them; for the sins of the nation were grown to that height, that though Moses and Samuel, Noah, Job and Daniel, had been then alive, to intercede for them, yet God declared * that he would not "hear them; nor "spare the nation for their sakes:" So that even such mighty intercessors could only save their own souls.

* Jer. v. 1. Ezek. xiv. 14.

In this deplorable ſtate we ſhall find that their Prieſts and Paſtors had their large Share. * "The Prieſts ſaid "not, Where is the Lord? They that handled the law "knew me not, the Paſtors alſo tranſgreſſed againſt "me;" and their corruption went ſo far, that they had not only falſe Prophets to ſupport them, but the people, who, how bad ſoever they may be themſelves, do generally hate evil Prieſts, grew to be pleaſed with it. † "The Prophets propheſy falſly; and the Prieſts "bear rule by their means: and my people love to "have it ſo: from the Prophet even to the Prieſt, "every one dealt falſly." And upon that, a ‡ "wo is "denounced againſt the Paſtors that deſtroyed and ſcat-"tered the ſheep of God's paſture." They by their office ought to have fed the people; but inſtead of that, "* they had ſcattered the flock, and driven them a-"way, and had not viſited them: both Prophet and "Prieſt were profane; their wickedneſs was found e-"ven in the houſe of God." In oppoſition to all which, God promiſes by the Prophet, that he would ſet † "Shep-"herds over them, that ſhould feed them;" ſo that the people ſhould have no more reaſon to be afraid of their Paſtors, or of being miſled by them; and he promiſed upon their return from the captivity, to ‡ "give "them Paſtors according to his own heart, who "ſhould feed them with knowledge and underſtanding."

* Jer. ii. 8. † Jer. v. 32. ‡ Jer. vi. 13. Jer. xxiii. 22.
* Jer. xxiii. 11. † Jer. xxiii. 48. ‡ Jer. iii. 15.

In Ezekiel we find the ſolemn and ſevere charge given to Watchmen, twice repeated; that they "ought "to warn the wicked from his wickedneſs; otherwiſe, "* though he ſhould indeed die in his ſin, God would "require his blood at the Watchman's hand; but if "he gave warning, he had by ſo doing, delivered his "own ſoul." In that prophecy we have the guilt of the Prieſts ſet forth very heinouſly. † "Her Prieſts "have violated my law, and profaned my holy things; "they have put no difference between the holy and "profane, the clean and the unclean, and have hid "their eyes from my Sabbaths;" the effect of which was, that "God was profaned among them." This is more fully proſecuted in the thirty-fourth chapter, which is all addreſſed to the Shepherds of Iſrael; ‡ "Wo be to the Shepherds of Iſrael, that do feed them-"ſelves: ſhould not the Shepherds feed the flock? Ye "eat the fat, and ye cloath you with the wool, * "ye kill them that are fed, but ye feed not the "flock:" then follows an enumeration of the ſeveral ſorts of troubles that the people were in, under the figure of a flock, to ſhew how they had neglected their duty, in all the parts and inſtances of it; and had truſted to their authority, which they had abuſed to tyranny and violence. ǂ "The diſeaſed have ye not "ſtrengthened, neither have ye healed that which

* Ezek. iii. 17. Ezek. xxxiii. 7. † Ezek. xxii. 26. ‡ Ezek. xxxiv. * Ezek. xxxiv. 3. ǂ Ezek. xxxiv. 4.

" was ſick, neither have ye bound up that which " was broken, neither have ye brought again that " which was driven away, neither have ye ſought " that which was loſt; but with force and with " cruelty have ye ruled them;" upon which follows a terrible expoſtulation, and denunciation of judgments againſt them: * " I am againſt the Shep- " herds, ſaith the Lord, I will require my flock at " their hands, and cauſe them to ceaſe from feeding " the flock; neither ſhall the Shepherds feed them- " ſelves any more." And in the forty-fourth chapter of that prophecy, one rule is given, which was ſet up in the primitive church, as an unalterable maxim, that ſuch Prieſts as had been guilty of idolatry, ſhould not do the office of a Prieſt any more, nor come near to any of the holy things, or enter within the ſanctuary, but were ſtill to bear their ſhame: they might miniſter in ſome inferior ſervices, ſuch as keeping the gates, or ſlaying the ſacrifice; but they were ſtill to " bear their " iniquity."

I have paſſed over all that occurs in theſe prophets, which relates to the falſe Prophets, becauſe I will bring nothing into this diſcourſe, that relates to ſins of another order and nature. In Daniel we have a noble expreſſion of the value of ſuch as † " turn men to righteouſ- " neſs, that they ſhall ſhine as the ſtars for ever and " ever." In Hoſea we find among the ſins and cala-

* Ezek. xxxiv. 10. † Dan. xii 3.

mities of that time, this reckoned as a main cauſe of that horrid corruption, under which they had fallen, there * "being no truth, no mercy, nor knowledge "of God in the land; which was defiled by ſwear- "ing, lying, killing, ſtealing, and committing adultery. "My people are deſtroyed for lack of knowledge:" to which is added, "Becauſe thou haſt rejected know- "ledge" (or the inſtructing of the people) "I will alſo "reject thee, that thou ſhalt be no Prieſt to me; ſee- "ing thou haſt forgot the law of thy God, I will alſo "forget thy children." That corrupt race of Prieſts attended ſtill upon the temple, and offered up the ſin-offering, and feaſted upon their portion; which is wrong rendred "They eat up the ſin of my people;" for ſin ſtands there, as in the law of Moſes, for ſin-offering: becauſe of the advantage this brought them, they were glad at the abounding of ſin; which is expreſſed "by "their ſetting their heart," or lifting up their ſoul "to "their iniquity:" the concluſion of which is, that "they "ſhould be given up for a very heavy curſe, of, Like "Prieſts like people,". In Joel we find the duty of the Prieſts and Miniſters of the Lord, ſet forth in times of great and approaching calamities, thus, they ought to be interceſſors for the people, and † "to "weep between the porch and the altar, and ſay, "Spare thy people, and give not thine heritage to "reproach, that the heathen (ſtrangers and idola-

* Hoſ. iv. 1, 2, 6. † Joel ii. 17.

ters) "ſhould rule over them: wherefore ſhould they "ſay among the people, Where is their God?" There is in Amos a very black character of a depraved prieſthood, * "Their Prieſts teach for hire, and their Pro-"phets divine for money."

Theſe were the fore-runners of the deſtruction of that nation: but though it might be expected, that the captivity ſhould have purged them from their droſs, as it did indeed free them from all inclinations to idolatry; yet other corruptions had a deeper root. We find in Zechariah † "a curſe againſt the "idol Shepherd," who reſembled the true Shepherd, as an idol does the original: but he was without ſenſe and life. "Wo be to the idol Shepherd that "leaveth the flock:" the curſe is figuratively expreſſed, "The ſword ſhall be upon his arm, and his right "eye:" (the things that he valued moſt) "his arm "ſhall be clean dried up, and his right eye ſhall be "utterly darkned:" But this is more copiouſly ſet out by Malachi, in an addreſs made to the Prieſts; "‡ And, now, O ye Prieſts, this commandment is "for you; if you will not hear, and if you will not "lay it to heart, to give glory unto my name, I will "even ſend a curſe upon you, and I will curſe your "bleſſings; yea I have curſed them already, becauſe "ye do not lay it to heart."---Then the firſt covenant with the tribe of Levi is ſet forth: "My covenant was

* Amos iii. v. 11. † Zech. xi. 15. ‡ Mal. ii. 1.

" with him, of life and peace: the law of truth was in " his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: " he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn " many from their iniquity: for the Prieſt's lips " ſhould preſerve knowledge, and they ſhould ſeek the " law at his mouth; for he is the meſſenger of the " Lord of Hoſts:" all this ſets forth the ſtate of a pure and holy prieſthood: but then follow terrible words; " But ye are departed out of the way, ye have " cauſed many to ſtumble at the law: ye have corrupt- " ed the covenant of Levi, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts. " therefore have I alſo made you contemptible, and " baſe before all the people; according as ye have not " kept my ways, but have been partial in the law." Their ill example made many loath both their law, and their religion: they had corrupted their inſtitution, and ſtudied by a groſs partiality, to bring the people to be exact in thoſe parts of the law, in which their wealth, or their authority was concerned; while they neglected the more eſſential and indiſpenſable duties.

Thus far have I gone over the moſt important places, that have occured to me in the Old Teſtament, relating to this matter; upon all which, I will only add one remark, that though ſome exception might be made to thoſe expreſſions, that import the dignity and ſanctification of thoſe who were then conſecrated to the holy functions, as parts of that inſtituted religion, which had its period by the coming of Chriſt; yet ſuch paſſages as

relate to moral duties, and to the obligations that ariſe out of natural religion, have certainly a more binding force, and ought to be underſtood and explained in a more elevated and ſublime ſenſe, under the new diſpenſation, which is internal and ſpiritual; compared to which, the old is called the letter and the fleſh: therefore the obligations of the Prieſts, under the Chriſtian religion, to a holy ſtrictneſs of life and converſation, to a diligent attendance on their flock, and for inſtructing and watching over them, muſt all be as much higher, and more binding, as this new covenant excels the old one.

CHAP. III.

Paſſages out of the New Teſtament, relating to the ſame matter.

THIS general conſideration receives a vaſt improvement from the great example that the Author of our religion, "the great Biſhop and Shepherd of our "ſouls," has ſet us; who went about, ever doing good, to whom "it was as his meat and drink, to do "the will of his father that ſent him: he was the good "Shepherd that knew his ſheep, and laid down his life "for them." And ſince he ſet ſuch a value on the ſouls of that flock which he hath redeemed, and purchaſed with his own blood; certainly thoſe to whom he has

committed that work of reconciliation which ſtood himſelf ſo dear, ought to conſider themſelves under very ſtrict obligations, by that charge of which they muſt give a ſevere account at the great day, in which the blood of all thoſe who have periſhed through their neglect and default, ſhall be required at their hands. Yet becauſe I will not aggravate this argument unreaſonably, I will make no uſe of thoſe paſſages which relate immediately to the Apoſtles: for their function being extraordinary, as were alſo the aſſiſtances that were given them for the diſcharge of it, I will urge nothing that belongs properly to their miſſion and duty.

In the character that the goſpel gives of the Prieſts and Phariſees of that time, we may ſee a juſt and true idea of the corruptions into which a bad clergy is apt to fall. They ſtudied to engroſs the knowledge of the law to themſelves, and to keep the people in ignorance, and in a blind dependance upon them: they were zealous in leſſer matters, but neglected the great things of the law: they put on an outward appearance of ſtrictneſs, but under that there was much rottenneſs: they ſtudied to make proſelytes to their religion, but they had ſo depraved it, that they became thereby worſe men than before: they made great ſhews of devotion, of praying, and faſting much, and giving alms; but all this was to be ſeen of men, and by it they devoured the eſtates of poor and ſimple people: they were very ſtrict in obſerving the traditions and cuſtoms of their

fathers, and of every thing that contributed to their own authority or advantage; but by ſo doing they made void the law of God: in a word, they had no true worth in themſelves, and hated ſuch as had it: they were proud and ſpiteful, falſe and cruel, and made uſe of the credit they were in with the people, by their complying with them in their vices, and flattering them with falſe hopes, to ſet them on to deſtroy all thoſe who diſcovered their corruptions, and whoſe real and ſhining worth, made their counterfeit ſhew of it the more conſpicuous and odious. In this ſhort view of thoſe enormous diſorders, which then reigned amongſt them, we have a full picture of the corrupt ſtate of bad Prieſts in all ages and religions, with this only difference, that the Prieſts in our Saviour's time were more careful and exact in the external and viſible parts of their converſation, than they have been in other times: in which they have thrown off the very decencies of a grave and ſober deportment.

But now to go on with the characters and rules that we find in the New Teſtament. Our Saviour as he compared the work of the goſpel in many parables to a field and harveſt, ſo he calls thoſe whom his father was to ſend, * "the Labourers in that harveſt;" and he left a direction to all his followers, to "pray his father that he would ſend Labourers "into his harveſt." Out of which both the vocation

* Matth. ix 37.

and divine miſſion of the clergy, and the prayers of the church to God for it, that are among us fixed to the ember-weeks, have been gathered by many pious writers. In the warnings that our Saviour gives to prepare for his ſecond coming, we find the characters of good and bad clergy-men ſtated*, in oppoſition to one another, under the figure of Stewards: the good are both "wiſe and faithful," they "wait for his coming," and in the mean while are "dividing to every one of their fellow ſervants his "portion to eat in due ſeaſon," that is, their proportion both of the doctrine and myſteries of the goſpel, according to their ſeveral capacities and neceſſities: but the bad Stewards are thoſe who put the evil day far from them, and "ſay in their heart, the Lord delay-"eth his coming," upon which "they eat, drink, and "are drunken:" they indulge their ſenſual appetites even to a ſcandalous exceſs; and as for their fellow ſervants, inſtead of feeding, of inſtructing, or watching over them, they "beat them," they exerciſe a violent and tyrannical authority over them. Their ſtate in the next world is repreſented as different as their behaviour in this was; the one ſhall be exalted from being a Steward to be a "Ruler over the houſhold," to be a "King and a Prieſt for ever unto God;" whereas the other "ſhall be cut aſunder, and ſhall have his portion "with unbelievers."

* Luke xii. 42.

The 10th of St. John is the place which both fathers, and more modern writers, have chiefly made uſe of to ſhew the difference between good and bad paſtors. The "good Shepherds enter by the door, and Chriſt "is the door" by whom they muſt enter; that is, from whom they muſt have their vocation and miſſion; but the "thief and robber," who comes to "kill, ſteal, "and deſtroy, climbeth up ſome other way:" whatever he may do in the ritual way for form's ſake, he has in his heart no regard to Jeſus Chriſt, to the honour of his perſon, the edification of his church, or the ſalvation of ſouls; he intends only to raiſe and enrich himſelf; and ſo he compaſſes that, he cares not how many ſouls periſh by his means, or through his neglect. "The "good ſhepherd knows his ſheep ſo well, that he can "call them by name, and lead them out, and they hear "his voice; but the hireling careth not for the ſheep, "he is a ſtranger to them, they know not his voice, "and will not follow him." This is urged by all, who have preſſed the obligation of Reſidence, and of the perſonal labours of the clergy, as a plain divine and indiſpenſable precept: and even in the Council of Trent, tho' by the practices of the court of Rome, it was diverted from declaring reſidence to be of divine right, the decree that was made to enforce it, urges this place to ſhew the obligation to it. The "good ſhepherd "feeds the flock, and looks for paſture for them, and "is ready to give his life for the ſheep;" but the bad

Shepherd is repreſented as a "hireling that careth not "for the flock, that ſees the wolf coming, and upon "that leaveth the ſheep and fleeth." This is, it is true, a figure, and therefore I know it is thought an ill way of reaſoning to build too much upon figurative diſcourſes; yet on the other hand, our Saviour having delivered ſo great a part of his doctrine in parables, we ought at leaſt to conſider the main ſcope of a parable; and may well build upon that, tho' every particular circumſtance in it cannot bear an argument.

I ſhall add but one paſſage more from the goſpels, which is much made uſe of by all that have writ of this matter. When our Saviour confirmed St. Peter in his Apoſtleſhip, from which he had fallen by his denying of him, as in the charge which he thrice repeated of "feeding his lambs and his ſheep*," he purſues ſtill the figure of a Shepherd; ſo the queſtion that he asked preparatory to it, was, "Simon, "loveſt thou me more than theſe?" From which they juſtly gather, that the love of God, a zeal for his honour, and a preferring of that to all other things whatſoever, is a neceſſary and indiſpenſable qualification for that holy employment; which diſtinguiſhes the true Shepherd from the Hireling; and by which only he can be both animated and fortified, to go through with the labours and difficulties, as well as the dangers and ſufferings, which may accompany it.

* John xii. 15.

When St. Paul was leaving his laſt charge with the Biſhops that met him at Epheſus, he ſtill makes uſe of the ſame metaphor of a Shepherd in thoſe often cited words, * "Take heed to yourſelves, and "to all the flock over which the Holy Ghoſt hath "made you Biſhops or Overſeers, to feed the church "of God, which he hath purchaſed with his own "blood." The words are ſolemn, and the conſideration enforcing them is a mighty one; they import the obligations of the clergy, both to an exactneſs in their own deportment, and to earneſt and conſtant labours, in imitation of the apoſtle, who during the three years of his ſtay among them, had been † "ſerving "God with all humility of mind, with many tears and "temptations; and had not ceaſed to warn every one, "both night and day with tears; and had taught them "publicly and from houſe to houſe‡." Upon which he leaves them, calling them all to witneſs that § "he "was pure from the blood of all men." There has been great diſputing concerning the perſons to whom theſe words were addreſſed; but if all parties had ſtudied more to follow the example here propoſed, and the charge that is here given, which are plain and eaſy to be underſtood, than to be contending about things that are more doubtful; the good lives and the faithful labours of apoſtolical biſhops, would have con-

* Acts xx. 28. † Acts xx. 19. ‡ Acts xx. 20. § Acts xx. 25.

tributed more both to the edifying and healing of the church, than all their arguments or reaſonings will ever be able to do.

St. Paul reckoning up to the Romans the ſeveral obligations of Chriſtians, of all ranks, to aſſiduity and diligence in their callings and labours, among others he numbers theſe, * "Miniſters, let us wait on our mi-"niſtring, or he that teaches on teaching, he that ru-"leth with diligence." In his epiſtle to the Corinthians, as he ſtates the dignity of the clergy in this, that they ought to be accounted of † "as the miniſters of "Chriſt, and ſtewards of the myſteries of God;" he adds, that "it is required in Stewards that a man be "found faithful." In that epiſtle he ſets down the perpetual law, which is the foundation of all the proviſion that has been made for the clergy, ‡ "That "the Lord hath ordained that they which preach "the goſpel ſhould live of the goſpel." But if upon that, the laity have looked on themſelves as bound to appoint ſo plentiful a ſupply, that the clergy might have whereon to live at their eaſe and in abundance; then certainly this was intended, that they being freed from the troubles and cares of this world, might attend continually § "on the miniſtry of the "word of God and on prayer." Thoſe who do that work negligently, provoke the laity to repent of

* Rom. xii. 7. † 1 Cor. iv. 2. ‡ 1 Cor. ix. 14. § Acts vi. 4.

their bounty, and to defraud them of it. For certainly there are no ſuch enemies to the patrimony and rights of the church, as thoſe who "eat the fat, "but do not preach the goſpel, nor feed the flock." Happy, on the other hand, are they, to whom that character, which the apoſtle aſſumes to himſelf, and to Timothy, does belong; * "Therefore ſeeing we have "received this miniſtry, as we have received mercy "we faint not: but have renounced the hidden things "of diſhoneſty, not walking in craftineſs, nor hand-"ling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifeſta-"tion of the truth, commending ourſelves to every "man's conſcience in the ſight ot God." In the Epiſtle to the Epheſians, we have the ends of the inſtitution of all the ranks of clergy-men ſet forth in theſe words; † "He gave ſome Apoſtles, and ſome Pro-"phets, and ſome Evangeliſts, and ſome Paſtors and "Teachers: for the perfecting of the ſaints, for "the work of the miniſtry, for the edifying the body "of Chriſt; till we all come in the unity of the faith, "and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a per-"fect man, unto the meaſure of the ſtature of the ful-"neſs of Chriſt." In theſe words we ſee ſomething that is ſo vaſt and noble, ſo far above thoſe ſlight and poor performances, in which the far greater part do too eaſily ſatisfy themſelves; that in charity to them we ought to ſuppoſe that they have not reflected ſufficiently

* 2 Cor. iv. 1, 2. † Eph. iv. 11, 12, 13.

on the importance of them; otherwiſe they would have in ſome ſort proportion'd their labours to thoſe great deſigns for which they are ordain'd; and would remember the charge given to the Coloſſians to ſay to Archippus, who it ſeems was remiſs in the diſcharge of his duty, "* Take heed to the miniſtry which thou haſt received "in the Lord, that thou fulfil it."

The epiſtles to Timothy and Titus are the foundation of all the canons of the church. In theſe we have the characters of Biſhops and Deacons, as well as the duties belonging to thoſe functions, ſo particularly ſet forth, that from thence alone every one who will weigh them well may find ſufficient inſtruction, "how he ought "to behave himſelf in the houſe of God." In theſe we ſee what patterns thoſe of the clergy ought to † "be in "word," (or doctrine) "in converſation, in chari-"ty, in ſpirit, in faith, and in purity; they ought "to give attendance to reading, to exhortation, and "to doctrine;" that is, both to the inſtructing and exhorting of their people. "They ought not to neglect "the gift that was given to them by the laying on of "hands; they ought to meditate on theſe things, to "give themſelves wholly to them, that ſo their profiting may appear unto all; and to take heed to themſelves and their doctrine, and to continue in them; "for in ſo doing they ſhall both ſave themſelves and "thoſe that hear them." Thoſe that govern the church

* Col. iv. 17. † 1 Tim. iv. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16.

are more particularly charged, * "before God, the "Lord Jesus, and the holy angels, that they ob- "serve these things without preferring one before a- "nother, doing nothing by partiality," by domestic regards, the considerations of friendship, intercessions, or importunity; and "above all, that they lay hands sud- "denly on no man;" to which are added words of great terror, "neither be thou partaker of other mens "sins: keep thyself pure." Which ought to make great impression on all those with whom the power of ordination is lodged, since they do plainly import, that such as do ordain any rashly without due enquiry, and a strict examination, entitle themselves to all the scandal they give, and become partners of their guilt; which, if well considered, must needs make all such as are not past feeling, use great care and caution in this sacred trust. Bishops are the depositaries of the faith, which they are to keep pure, and to hand down faithfully according to these words, † "And "the things which thou hast heard of me among "many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful "men, who may be able to teach others also." Upon this he prepares the Bishops for difficulties, "to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus "Christ." And according to that figure, since those that go to war do not carry unnecessary burdens with them which may encumber or retard their march, he adds,

* 1 Tim. v. 21, 22. † 2 Tim. ii. 2, 3, 4.

" No man that warreth entangleth himſelf with the af-
" fairs of this life, that he may pleaſe him who hath
" choſen him for a ſoldier." Upon this it is that all thoſe Canons, which have been made in ſo many ages of the church againſt church-mens meddling with ſecular affairs, have been founded; than which we find nothing more frequently provided againſt, both in the apoſtolical canons, in thoſe of Antioch, in thoſe made by the general council of Calcedon, and in divers of the councils of Carthage: but this abuſe had too deep a root in the nature of man to be eaſily cured. St. Paul does alſo in this place carry on the metaphor, to expreſs the earneſtneſs and indefatigableneſs of clergymens zeal; that as officers in an army were ſatisfyed with nothing under victory, which brought them the honours of a triumph, ſo we ought to fight, not only ſo as to earn our pay, but for maſtery, to ſpoil and overcome the powers of darkneſs; yet even this muſt "be done
" lawfully," not by deceiving the people with pious frauds, hoping that our good intentions will atone for our taking bad methods. War has its laws as well as peace, and thoſe who manage this ſpiritual warfare*, ought to keep themſelves within the inſtructions and commands that are given them. Then the Apoſtle changing the figure from the ſoldier to the workman and ſteward, ſays, "† Study to ſhew thyſelf approved unto God" (not to ſeek the vain applauſe of men, but to prefer to

* 2 Tim. ii. 5. † 2 Tim. ii. 15.

all other things the witneſs of a good conſcience, and that in ſimplicity and godly ſincerity, he may walk and labour as in the ſight of God) "a workman that needeth "not to be aſhamed; rightly dividing the word of truth." This is, according to the figure of a ſteward, giving every one his due portion; and a little after comes a noble admonition, relating to the meekneſs of the clergy towards thoſe that divide from them: * "The "ſervant of the Lord muſt not ſtrive; but be gentle "to all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekneſs in- "ſtructing thoſe that oppoſe themſelves, if per- "adventure God will give them repentance, to the "acknowledging the truth." This is the paſſage that was chiefly urged by our reformers againſt the perſecuting that the Roman clergy did every where ſet on againſt them: the extent of it ought to be well conſidered, that ſo it may not be ſaid, that we are only againſt perſecution when it lies on ourſelves; for if it is a good defence to ſome, it is as good to others; unleſs we own that we do not govern ourſelves by that rule "of doing to others that which we would have "others do to us." In the next chapter, we find the right education of this biſhop, and that which furniſhes a clergyman to perform all the duties incumbent on him: † "From a child thou haſt known the holy "ſcriptures, which are able to make thee wiſe unto "ſalvation, through faith in Chriſt Jeſus:" that is,

* 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25, 26. † 2 Tim. iii. 15.

the Old Teſtament well ſtudied, by one that believed Jeſus to be the Meſſias, and that was led into it by that faith, did diſcover to man the great oeconomy of God in the progreſs of the light which he made to ſhine upon the world by degrees, unto the perfect day of the appearing of the Sun of Righteouſneſs; and to this he adds a noble character of the inſpired writings: ‡ "All "ſcripture is given by inſpiration of God, and is profit- "able for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for in- "ſtructing in righteouſneſs, that the man of God may "be perfect, throughly furniſhed unto all good works." The apoſtle goes on and gives Timothy the moſt ſolemn charge that can be ſet out in words; which if underſtood, as belonging to all biſhops, as the whole church of God has ever done, muſt be read by them with trembling. † "I charge thee therefore before God "and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſhall judge the quick "and the dead at his appearing, and his kingdom, "preach the word, be inſtant in ſeaſon, out of ſea- "ſon, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-ſuffering "and doctrine" (that is, with great gentleneſs in the manner, and clearneſs and ſtrength in the matter of their inſtructions.) And a little after, ‡ "Watch thou in all "things, endure affliction, do the work of an evangeliſt; "make full proof of (or fulfil) thy miniſtry." And as a conſideration to enforce this the more, he tells what a noble and agreeable proſpect he had in the view of his

‡ 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. † 2 Tim. iv. 1, 2. ‡ 2 Tim. iv. 5.

approaching diſſolution; * "the time of his departing "drew nigh, he was ready to be offered up," as a ſacrifice for that faith which he had ſo zealouſly and ſo ſucceſsfully preached. And here we have his two great preparatives for martyrdom; the one who looking on his paſt life and labours; † "I have fought a good "fight, I have finiſhed my courſe, I have kept the "faith:" The other, was looking forward to the reward, ‡ "that crown of righteouſneſs which was "laid up for him, which the Lord the righteous "Judge would give him at that day; and not only "to him, but alſo to all thoſe that loved his ap-"pearing;" and certainly more eſpecially to thoſe who not only loved it themſelves, but who laboured ſo as to diſpoſe others alſo to love it. To all theſe conſiderations, tho' nothing needed to have been added, to one upon whom they made ſo ſtrong an impreſſion, as they did upon Timothy, yet one comes after all, which ought to teach us to work out "our ſalvation with "fear and trembling," ſince St. Paul tells Timothy that Demas, one of the companions of his labours, "had "forſaken him;" and that which prevailed over him was, "the love of this preſent world§."

Theſe are the rules and charges given by St. Paul to Timothy, and in him to all the Biſhops and Paſtors that were to come after him in the church. Some of theſe

* 2 Tim. iv. 6. † 2 Tim. iv. 7. ‡ 2 Tim. iv. 8.
§ 2 Tim. iv. 10.

are again repeated in his Epiſtle to Titus, where we have the characters ſet out, by which he was to prepare and examine thoſe Elders or Biſhops, who were to "rule "the houſe of God;" that thoſe being well choſen, they might be able * "by ſound doctrine both to exhort and "convince the gainſayers;" and that he might do his duty with the more advantage, he charges him to † "ſhew himſelf in all things a pattern of good works; "in doctrine, ſhewing uncorruptneſs, gravity, ſinceri- "ty; and uſing ſuch ſound ſpeech as could not be con- "demned; that ſo thoſe who are of the contrary par- "ty" (the Judaizers who were ſtudying to corrupt the Chriſtian religion by making a medly of it and Judaiſm) "might have no evil thing to ſay of him:" and after a glorious but ſhort abſtract of the deſign of their holy religion; he concludes that part of the epiſtle in theſe words, "Theſe things ſpeak and exhort, and rebuke "with all authority:" to which he adds a charge, that may ſeem more proper to be addreſſed to others, than to himſelf, ‡ "Let no man deſpiſe thee." The ſame is likewiſe in his epiſtle to Timothy, with this addition, ⁂ "Let no man deſpiſe thy youth." But theſe words do import, that it is in a Biſhop's own power to procure due eſteem to himſelf, at leaſt to prevent contempt, ſince a holy and exemplary deportment, and faithful and conſtant labours, never fail to do that.

* Tit. i. 6. † Tit. ii. 7, 8. ‡ Tit. ii. 15. ⁂ 1 Tim. iv. 12.

In the concluſion of the epiſtle to the Hebrews, we find both the characters of thoſe who had laboured among them, and had ruled them, but who were then dead; and alſo of ſuch as were yet alive. * "Remember them "who had the rule over you, who have ſpoken to you "the word of God, whoſe faith follow, conſidering the "end of their converſation." They had both lived and died, as well as laboured in ſuch a manner, that the remembring of what had appeared in them, was an effectual means of perſuading the Hebrews to be ſteady in the Chriſtian religion: for certainly, though while a man lives let him be ever ſo eminent, there is ſtill room for ill-nature and jealouſy to miſrepreſent things, and to ſuſpect that ſomething lies hid under the faireſt appearances, which may ſhew itſelf in due time; all that goes off, when one has finiſhed his courſe, ſo that all appears to be of a piece, and that he has died as he had lived. Then the argument from his converſation appears in its full ſtrength without any diminution. But the charge given with relation to thoſe who then had the rule over them, is no leſs remarkable, † "Obey them that have the rule over "you; and ſubmit yourſelves, for they watch for your "ſouls, as they that muſt give account, that they may "do it with joy, and not with grief; for that is unprofitable for you." Here obedience and ſubmiſſion is enjoined, upon the account of their "rulers watching over them, and for them:" and therefore thoſe who

* Heb. xiii. 7. † Heb. xiii. 17.

do not watch like men that know that they muſt give account of that truſt, have no reaſon to expect theſe from their people: of a piece with this is St. Paul's charge to the Theſſalonians, "We beſeech you to "know" (or to acknowledge,) "them which labour "among you, and are over you in the Lord, and ad- "moniſh you, and to eſteem them very highly in love, "for their work's ſake." Here both the ſubmiſſion and eſteem, as well as the acknowledgment that is due to the clergy, is ſaid to be for "their works ſake:" and therefore ſuch as do not the work, and that do not labour and admoniſh their people, have no juſt claim to them. There is another expreſſion in the ſecond epiſtle to the Theſſalonians, that is much urged by thoſe who have writ on this head, "That if any will not work he "ſhould not eat;" which if it is a rule binding all men, ſeems to lie much heavier on the clergy.

I ſhall conclude all that I intend to bring out of the ſcripture upon this argument, with St. Peter's charge to the Elders of the churches to which he writ; which is indeed ſo full, that though in the courſe of the New Teſtament, it had not lain laſt, it deſerved by the rules of method, to be kept laſt, for the cloſing and enforcing all that has gone before, and for giving it its full weight. St. Peter deſcends, Epiſt. 1. Chap. v. ver. 1. to a level with them, calling himſelf no better than a "fellow El- "der, and a witneſs of the ſuffering of Chriſt; and al- "ſo a partaker of the glory which was to be revealed.

" Feed the flock of God (ſays he) which is among you," (theſe words will bear another rendering " as much as " lieth in you) taking the overſight thereof not by con- " ſtraint" (as forced to it by rules, canons, or laws) " but willingly, not for filthy lucre," (for though God has ordained that ſuch as preach the goſpel ſhould live of the goſpel; yet thoſe who propoſe that to themſelves as the chief motive in entering into holy orders, are hereby ſeverely condemned) " but of a ready mind, " neither as being Lords over God's heritage" (or not uſing a deſpotic authority over their ſeveral lots or diviſions) " but being examples to the flock," not tyrannizing it over their people: but acquiring their authority chiefly by their own exemplary converſation. The concluſion of the charge is ſuitable to the ſolemnity of it in theſe words: " And when the chief Shepherd ſhall " appear, ye ſhall likewiſe receive a crown of glory " that fadeth not away."

With this I make an end of citations from ſcripture: I think it is as plain as words can make any thing, that ſuch as are dedicated to the ſervice of God and of his church, ought to labour conſtantly and faithfully: and that in their own perſons. For it is not poſſible to expreſs a perſonal obligation, in terms that are both more ſtrict and more ſolemn than theſe are which have been cited, and all the returns of obedience and ſubmiſſion, of eſteem and ſupport, being declared to be due to them on the account of their " watching over "

and "feeding the flock of God," thoſe who pretend to theſe, without conſidering themſelves as under the other obligations, are guilty of the worſt ſort of ſacrilege, in devouring the things that are ſacred, without doing thoſe duties for which theſe are due; and what right ſoever the law of the land may give them to them, yet certainly according to the divine law, thoſe who do not wait * "at the altar, ought not to be par-"takers with the altar: thoſe who do not mini-"ſter about holy things, ought not to live of the "things of the temple: nor ought thoſe who do not "preach the goſpel, live of the goſpel." If I had a mind to make a great ſhew of reading, or to triumph in my argument with the pomp of quotations, it were very eaſy to bring a cloud of witneſſes, to confirm the application that I have made of theſe paſſages of ſcripture: indeed all thoſe who have either writ commentaries on the ſcriptures, ancient and modern, or have left homilies on theſe ſubjects, have preſſed this matter ſo much, that every one that has made any progreſs in eccleſiaſtical learning, muſt know that one might ſoon ſtuff a great many pages with abundance of quotations out of the authors, both of the beſt, and of the worſt ages of the church: not only the fathers, but even the ſchool-men; and which is more, the canoniſts have carried this matter very high, and have even delivered it as a maxim, that all diſpenſations that are procured upon

* 1 Cor. ix. 13, 14.

undue pretences, the chief of which they reckon the giving a man an eaſy and large ſubſiſtence, are null and void of themſelves: and conclude, that how ſtrong ſoever they may be in law, yet they are nothing in conſcience: and that they do not free a man from his obligations to reſidence and labour: and they do generally conclude, that he who upon a diſpenſation, which has been obtained upon carnal accounts, ſuch as birth, rank or great abilities, (and qualifications that are not yet ſo good as theſe) does not reſide, is bound in conſcience to reſtore the fruits of a benefice which he has thus enjoyed with a bad conſcience, without performing the duty belonging to it in his own perſon. But though it were very eaſy to bring out a great deal to this purpoſe, I will go no further at preſent upon this head: the words of God ſeem to be ſo expreſs and poſitive; that ſuch as do not yield to ſo undiſputable an authority, will be little moved by all that can be brought out of authors of a lower form, againſt whom it will be eaſy to muſter up many exceptions, if they will not be determined by ſo many of the "oracles of the living God."

VH
MVSEVM
BRITANNICVM

CHAP. IV.

Of the ſenſe of the primitive church in this matter.

I Will not enter here into any hiſtorical account of the diſcipline of the church, during the firſt and beſt ages of Chriſtianity. It is the glory of the church, that in her diſputes on both hands, as well with thoſe of the church of Rome, as with thoſe that ſeparate from her, ſhe has both the doctrine and the conſtitution of the primitive church on her ſide. But this plea would be more entire and leſs diſputable, if our conſtitution were not only in its main and moſt eſſential parts, formed upon that glorious model; but were alſo in its rules and adminiſtrations, made more exactly conformable to thoſe beſt and pureſt times. I can never forget an advice that was given me above thirty years ago, by one of the worthieſt clergy-men now alive; while I was ſtudying the controverſy relating to the government of the church, from the primitive times, he deſired me to join with the more ſpeculative diſcoveries, that I ſhould make, the ſenſe that they had of the obligations of the clergy, both with relation to their lives and to their labours: and ſaid that the argument in favour of the church, how clearly ſoever made out, would never have its full effect upon the world, till abuſes were ſo far corrected, that we could ſhew a primitive ſpirit in our

adminiſtration, as well as a primitive pattern for our conſtitution. This made, even then, deep impreſſions on me, and I thank God the ſenſe of it has never left me in the whole courſe of my ſtudies.

I will not at preſent enter upon ſo long and ſo invidious a work as the deſcending into all the particulars, into which this matter might be branched out; either from the writings of the fathers, the decrees of councils, the Roman law and capitulars, or even from the dreg of all, the canon law itſelf, which though a collection made in one of the worſt ages, yet carries many rules in it, that would ſeem exceſſively ſevere, even to us, after our reformation of doctrine and worſhip. This has been already done with ſo much exactneſs, that it will not be neceſſary to ſet about it after the harveſt, which was gathered by the learned Biſhop of Spalato in the laſt book of his great work: which the pride and inconſtancy of the author, brought under a diſeſteem, that it no way deſerves; for whatever he might be, that work was certainly one of the beſt productions of that age. But this deſign has been proſecuted of late with much more exactneſs and learning, and with great honeſty and fidelity, where the intereſt of his church did not force him to uſe a little art, by F. Thomaſin, who has compared the modern and the antient diſcipline, and has ſhewed very copiouſly, by what ſteps the change was made; and how abuſes crept into the church. It is a work of great uſe, to ſuch as deſire to

underſtand that matter truly. I will refer the curious to theſe, and many other leſſer treatiſes, writ by the Janſeniſts in France, in which abuſes are very honeſtly complained of, and proper remedies are propoſed; which in many places being entertained by Biſhops, that had a right ſenſe of the primitive rules, have given the riſe to a great reformation of the French clergy.

Inſtead then of any hiſtorical deduction of theſe matters, I ſhall content myſelf with giving the ſenſe of two of the fathers of the Greek church, and one of the Latin, upon this whole buſineſs, of the obligations of the clergy. The firſt is Gregory of Nazianzum, whoſe father ordained him a Preſbyter, notwithſtanding all his humble interceſſions to the contrary, according to the cuſtom of the beſt men of that age, who inſtead of preſſing into orders, or aſpiring to them, fled from them, excuſed themſelves, and judging themſelves unworthy of ſo holy a character and ſo high a truſt, were not without difficulty prevailed on to ſubmit to that, which in degenerate ages men run to as to a ſubſiſtence, or the means of procuring it, and ſeem to have no other ſenſe of that ſacred inſtitution, than mechanics have of obtaining their freedom in that trade or company in which they have paſſed their apprenticeſhip. It were indeed happy for the church, if thoſe who offer themſelves to orders, had but ſuch a ſenſe of them as tradeſmen have of their freedom: who do not pretend to it till they have finiſhed the time preſcribed; and are in ſome

ſort qualified to ſet up in it: whereas, alas! men who neither know the ſcriptures, nor the body of divinity, who have made no progreſs in their ſtudies, and can give no tolerable account of that holy doctrine, in which they deſire to be teachers, do yet, with equal degrees of confidence and importunity, pretend to this character, and find the way to it too eaſy, and the acceſs to it too free. But this holy father had a very different ſenſe of this matter. He had indeed ſubmitted to his father's authority, he being his Biſhop as well as his father. But immediately after he was ordained, he gives this account of himſelf in his apologetical oration; that he judging he had not that 'ſublimity of virtue, 'nor that familiar acquaintance with divine matters, 'which became Paſtors and Teachers;' he therefore intending to purify his own ſoul 'to higher degrees of 'virtue, to an exaltation above ſenſible objects, above 'his body, and above the world, that ſo he might 'bring his mind to a recollected and divine ſtate, and 'fit his ſoul, that as a poliſhed mirror it might carry on 'it the impreſſions of divine ideas unmixed with the al-'lay of earthly objects, and might be ſtill caſting a 'brightneſs upon all his thoughts,' did in order to the raiſing himſelf to that, retire to the wilderneſs. He had obſerved that many 'preſſed to handle the holy myſte-'ries, with unwaſhed hands, and defiled ſouls: and 'before they were meet to be initiated to the divine vo-'cation, were crouding about the altar; not to ſet pat-

'terns to others, but deſigning only a ſubſiſtence to
'themſelves: reckoning that the holy dignity, was not
'a truſt for which an account was to be given, but a
'ſtate of authority and exemption. They had neither
'piety nor parts to recommend them, but were the re-
'proaches of the Chriſtian religion, and were the peſts
'of the church: which infected it faſter than any
'plague could do the air; ſince men did eaſily run to
'imitate bad examples, but were drawn off very hard-
'ly by the perfecteſt patterns to the practice of vir-
'tue. Upon which he formed a high idea of the emi-
'nent worth and virtue which became thoſe who go-
'verned the church; and of the great progreſs that
'they ought to be daily making; not contented with
'low meaſures of it, as if they were to weigh it critical-
'ly in nice ballances, and not to riſe up to the higheſt
'degrees poſſible in it. Yet even this, was not all: for
'to govern mankind, which was ſo various and ſo un-
'certain a ſort of creature, ſeemed to him the higheſt
'pitch of knowledge and wiſdom, as far above that
'ſkill and labour that is neceſſary to the curing of bodi-
'ly diſeaſes, as the ſoul is ſuperior to the body; and
'yet ſince ſo much ſtudy and obſervation was neceſſary
'to make a man a ſkilful phyſician, he concluded
'that much more was neceſſary for the ſpiritual me-
'dicine: the deſign of which was to give wings to the
'ſoul, to raiſe it above the world, and to conſecrate it
'to God.' Here he runs out into a noble rapture, upon

the excellence and ſublimity of the Chriſtian religion, and upon the art of governing ſouls, of the different methods to be taken, according to the diverſity of mens capacities and tempers; and of dividing the word of God aright, among them. The difficulties of which he proſecutes in a great variety of ſublime expreſſions and figures; but concludes lamenting that 'there was ſo 'little order then obſerved, that men had ſcarce paſſed 'their childhood, when, before they underſtood the 'ſcriptures, not to ſay before they had waſhed off the 'ſpots and defilements of their ſouls, if they had learned but two or three pious words, which they had got 'by heart, or had read ſome of the Pſalms of David, 'and put on an outward garb that carried an appearance of piety in it, theſe men were preſently puſhed 'on by the vanity of their minds, to aſpire to the 'government of the church.' To ſuch perſons he addreſſes himſelf very rhetorically, and aſks them, 'what 'they thought of the commoneſt employments, ſuch as 'the playing on inſtruments, or of dancing, in compariſon with divine wiſdom: for acquiring the one, 'they knew great pains and much practice was neceſſary: could they then imagine that the other ſhould 'be ſo eaſily attained?" But he adds, 'that one may 'as well ſow upon rocks, and talk to the deaf, as hope 'to work upon perſons, who have not yet got to that 'degree of wiſdom, of being ſenſible of their own ignorance.' This evil he had often with many tears la-

'mented, but the pride of ſuch men was ſo great, that 'nothing under the authority of a St. Peter or a St. 'Paul, could work upon them.' Upon this mention of St. Paul, he breaks out into a rapture, upon his labours and ſufferings, and the care of all the churches that lay on him; his becoming all things to all men, his gentleneſs where that was neceſſary, and his authority upon other occaſions, his zeal, his patience, his conſtancy, and his prudence, in fulfilling all the parts of his miniſtry. Then he cites ſeveral of the paſſages of the Prophets, particularly thoſe of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, Zachariah and Malachi, which relate to the corruptions of the Prieſts and Shepherds of Iſrael. And ſhews how applicable they were to the clergy at that time, and that all the woes denounced againſt the Scribes and Phariſees belonged to them, with heavy aggravations. 'Theſe 'thoughts poſſeſſed him day and night; they did eat 'out his very ſtrength and ſubſtance; they did ſo 'afflict and deject him, and gave him ſo terrible a 'proſpect of the judgments of God, which they were 'drawing down upon the church, that he, inſtead of 'daring to undertake any part of the government of it, 'was only thinking how he ſhould cleanſe his own ſoul, 'and fly from the wrath which was to come; and 'could not think that he was yet, while ſo young, 'meet to handle holy things.' When he runs out into a new rapture in magnifying the dignity of holy functions, and upon that ſays, 'that though he

'had been dedicated to God from his mother's womb, 'and had renounced the world and all that was charming in it, even eloquence itſelf, and had delighted long 'in the ſtudy of the ſcriptures, and had ſubdued many 'of his appetites and paſſions; yet after all this, in 'which perhaps he had become a fool in glorying, he 'had ſo high a notion of the care and government of 'ſouls, that he thought it above his ſtrength; eſpecially in ſuch bad times in which all things were out of 'order; factions were formed, and charity was loſt; 'ſo that the very name of a Prieſt was a reproach, as if 'God had poured out contempt upon them; and there'by impious men daily blaſphemed his name.' And indeed, all the ſhew of religion that remained, was in their mutual heats and animoſities, concerning ſome matters of religion; 'they condemned and cenſured one ano'ther, they cheriſhed and made uſe of the worſt men, 'ſo they were true to their party; they concealed 'their crimes, nay, they flattered and defended ſome 'that ſhould not have been ſuffered to enter into the 'ſanctuary: they gave the holy things to dogs, while 'they enquired very narrowly into the failings of 'thoſe that differed from them, not that they might la'ment them, but that they might reproach them for 'them. The ſame faults which they excuſed in ſome, 'were declaimed againſt in others: ſo that the very 'name of a good or a bad man was not now conſider'ed, as the character of their lives, but of their being

'of or againſt a ſide. And theſe abuſes were ſo univer-
'ſal, that they were like people like Prieſt: if thoſe
'heats had ariſen upon the great heads of reli-
'gion, he ſhould have commended the zeal of thoſe
'who had contended for the truth, and ſhould have
'ſtudied to have followed it. But their diſputes were
'about ſmall matters, and things of no conſequence;
'and yet even theſe were fought for, under the glori-
'ous title of the faith, though the root of all was men's
'private animoſities: theſe things had expoſed the
'Chriſtian religion to the hatred of the Heathen, and
'had given even the Chriſtians themſelves very hard
'thoughts of the clergy: this was grown to that
'height, that they were then acted and repreſented up-
'on the ſtage, and made the ſubject of the people's
'ſcorn. So that by their means the name of God was
'blaſphemed: this was that which gave him much
'ſadder apprehenſions, than all that could be feared
'from that wild beaſt, that was then beginning to vex
'and perſecute the church,' (by which probably Ju-
lian is meant) 'the comfortable proſpect of dying for
'the name of Chriſt, made that a perſecution was not
'ſo dreadful a thing, in his account, as the ſins, the di-
'viſions, and diſtractions of Chriſtians.' This then was
the reaſon that had made him fly to the wilderneſs, for the
ſtate of the church had made him deſpond, and loſe all
his courage: he had alſo gone thither, that he might
quite break himſelf to all his appetites and paſſions, and

to all the pleaſures and concerns of this life, that did darken the ſhinings of the divine image upon his ſoul, and the emanations of the heavenly light. When he conſidered the judgments of God upon bad Prieſts, and many other ſtrict rules in the old diſpenſation, and the great obligations that lay upon thoſe who were the Prieſts of the living God, and that ought, before they preſumed to offer up other ſacrifices, to begin with the oblation of themſelves to God; he was, upon all theſe reaſons, moved to prepare himſelf by ſo long a retreat.

I have given this long abſtract of his apolegetical oration, not only to ſet before my reader, the ſenſe that he had of the ſacred functions, but likewiſe to ſhew what were the corruptions of that age, and with how much freedom this holy father laid them open. If there is any occaſion for applying any part of this to the preſent age, or to any perſons in it, I choſe rather to offer it in the words of this great man, than in any of my own. I wiſh few were concerned in them; and that ſuch as are, would make a due application of them to themſelves, and ſave others the trouble of doing it more ſeverely.

I go next to another father of the Greek church, St. Chryſoſtome, whoſe books of the Prieſthood, have been ever reckoned among the beſt pieces of antiquity. The occaſion of writing them, was this: he had lived many years in great friendſhip with Baſil; at laſt, they have

ing both dedicated themſelves to ſacred ſtudies, the clergy of Antioch had reſolved to lay hold on them, and to uſe that holy violence which was in thoſe times often done to the beſt men, and to force them to enter into orders. Which when Baſil told Chryſoſtome, he concealed his own intentions, but preſſed Baſil to ſubmit to it, who from that, believing that his friend was of the ſame mind, did not go out of the way, and ſo he was laid hold on; but Chryſoſtome had hid himſelf. Baſil, ſeeing he could not be found, did all that was poſſible to excuſe himſelf: but that not being accepted of, he was ordained: next time that he met his friend, he expoſtulated ſeverely with him for having forſaken him upon that occaſion: this gave the occaſion to thoſe books, which are purſued in the way of a dialogue.

The firſt book contains only the preparatory diſcourſes, according to the method of ſuch writings. In the ſecond he runs out to ſhew from our Saviour's words to St. Peter, "Simon, loveſt thou me?" 'What tender 'and fervent love both to Chriſt and to his church, a 'Prieſt ought to feel in himſelf before he enters upon 'the feeding thoſe ſheep, which Chriſt has purchaſed 'with his own blood. To loſe the ſouls of the flock 'firſt, and then one's own ſoul, through remiſſineſs, was 'no light matter. To have both the powers of dark-'neſs, and the works of the fleſh to fight againſt, re-'quired no ordinary meaſure both of ſtrength and cou-'rage. He purſues the allegories of a Shepherd, and a

'Phyſician, to ſhew by the parallel of theſe laid toge-
'ther, the labours and difficulties of the prieſthood, e-
'ſpecially, when this authority was to be maintained
'only by the ſtrength of perſuaſion; and yet ſometimes
'ſevere methods muſt be taken, like inciſions to pre-
'vent gangrenes, or to cut off a part already corrupted.
'In the managing this, great art and prudence was ne-
'ceſſary: a biſhop ought to have a great and generous,
'a patient and undaunted mind: therefore, Chry-
'ſoſtome ſays that he found, though he truly loved his
'Saviour, yet he was ſo afraid to offend him, that he
'durſt not undertake a charge, that he did not yet judge
'himſelf qualified for. It was not enough that a man was
'tolerably well eſteemed by others: he ought to exa-
'mine himſelf; for that of a Biſhop's being well reported
'of, is but one of many characters, declared neceſſary
'by St. Paul. He complains much that thoſe who rai-
'ſed men to orders, had more regard to rank and
'wealth, and to much time ſpent in a vain ſearch into
'profane learning (though Chriſt choſe fiſhermen and
'tentmakers) than to true worth, and an earneſt
'zeal for the real good of the church. In the third
'book, he runs out with a great compaſs on the prai-
'ſes of the prieſtly function; he looked upon it as a dig-
'nity raiſed far above all the honours of this world, and
'approaching to the angelical glory. A Prieſt ought to
'aſpire to a purity above that of other mortals, an-
'ſwering that of angels. When a Prieſt performs the

'holy functions, is ſanctifying the holy euchariſt, and
'and is offering a crucified Chriſt to the people, his
'thoughts ſhould carry him heavenwards, and as it
'were tranſlate him into thoſe upper regions. If
'the Moſaical Prieſt was to be holy, that offered up
'ſacrifices of a lower order, how much holier
'ought the Prieſts of this religion to be, to whom
'Chriſt has given the power both of retaining and
'forgiving of ſins? But if St. Paul, after all his vi-
'ſions and labours, after all his raptures and ſuf-
'ferings, yet was inwardly burnt up with the con-
'cerns of the church, and laboured with much fear and
'trembling, how much greater apprehenſions ought
'other perſons to have of ſuch a truſt? If it were e-
'nough to be called to this function, and to go thro'
'with the duties incumbent on it in ſome tolerable
'manner, the danger were not great: but when the
'duty, as well as dignity, together with the danger be-
'longing to it, are all laid together, a man is forced to
'have other thoughts of the matter. No man that
'knows he is not capable of conducting a ſhip, will un-
'dertake it, let him be preſſed to it never ſo much.
'Ambitious men, that loved to ſet themſelves forward,
'were of all others the moſt expoſed to temptations:
'they were apt to be inflamed by the ſmalleſt provo-
'cations, to be glad at the faults of others, and trou-
'bled if they ſaw any do well; they courted applauſe,
'and aſpired to honour; they fawned on great perſons,

'and trod on thoſe that were below them; they made
'baſe ſubmiſſions, undecent addreſſes, and often
'brought preſents to thoſe in authority; they durſt
'not in any ſort reprove them for their faults, tho'
'they reproached the poor out of meaſure for their
'failings. Theſe were not the natural conſequences of
'the dignity of the prieſthood; but unworthy and de-
'filed perſons, who, without true merit, had been ad-
'vanced to it, had brought it under reproach. There
'had been no due care uſed in the choice of Biſhops,
'and by the means of bad choices the church was al-
'moſt ruined, thro' the groſs ignorance and unworthi-
'neſs of many in that poſt. Certainly a worthy Prieſt
'has no ambitious aſpirings: thoſe who fly to this dig-
'nity from that baſe principle, will give a full vent to
'it when they have attained it. If ſubmiſſions, flatte-
'ries, and money itſelf are neceſſary, all will be em-
'ployed; therefore it was an indiſpenſable preparation
'to it, that one ſhould be duly ſenſible of the greatneſs
'of the truſt, and of his own unfitneſs for it, that ſo he
'might neither vehemently deſire it, nor be uneaſy if
'he ſhould happen to be turned out of it. A man may
'deſire the office of a Biſhop, when he conſiders it as a
'work of toil and labour; but nothing is more peſti-
'ferous than to deſire it becauſe of the power and au-
'thority that accompanies it. Such perſons can never
'have the courage that ought to ſhew itſelf in the diſ-
'charge of their duty, in the reproving of ſin, and yet

'turing on the indignation of great men. He confeſſes
'he had not yet heen able to free his mind from that
'diſeaſe, and, till he had ſubdued it, he judged him-
'ſelf bound to fly from all the ſteps to preferment; for
'the nearer he ſhould come to it, he reckoned the
'appetite to it would rage the higher within him;
'whereas the way to break it quite, was to keep him-
'ſelf at the greateſt diſtance from it: nor had he that
'vivacity, or lively activity of temper, which became
'this function; nor that ſoftneſs and gentleneſs of mind,
'that was neceſſary to prepare him to bear injuries, to
'endure contempt, or to treat people with the mild-
'neſs that Chriſt has enjoined his followers, which he
'thought more neceſſary to a Biſhop than all faſtings or
'bodily mortifications whatſoever: and he runs out
'into a long digreſſion upon the great miſchiefs that a
'fretful and ſpiteful temper did to him that was under
'the power of it, and to the church, when a Biſhop
'was ſour'd with it. It will often break out, it will be
'much obſerved, and will give great ſcandal: for as a
'little ſmoke will darken and hide the cleareſt object;
'ſo if all the reſt of a Biſhop's life were brighter than
'the beams of the ſun, a little blemiſh, a paſſion, or in-
'diſcretion, will darken all, and make all the reſt be
'forgotten. Allowances are not made to them as to o-
'ther men, the world expects great things from them,
'as if they had not fleſh and blood in them, not a hu-
'man, but an angelical nature; therefore a Biſhop

ought, by a conſtant watchfulneſs, and a perpetual ſtrictneſs, to be arm'd with the armour of proof on all ſides, that no wound may hurt him. Stories will be eaſily believed to his diſadvantage, and his clergy about him will be ready to find them out, and to ſpread them abroad. He lays this down for a certain maxim, That every man knows himſelf beſt; and therefore, whatſoever others might think of him, he who knew well that he had not in himſelf thoſe qualifications that were neceſſary for this function, ought not to ſuffer himſelf to be determined by that. After this he lays open the great diſorders, factions, partialities, and calumnies, with which the popular elections were at that time managed, and the general corruption that had over-run the whole church; ſo that the ſtrictneſs and authority, the gentleneſs and prudence, the courage and patience, that were neceſſary to a Biſhop, were very hard to be found all together. He inſtances, to make out the difficulty of diſcharging the duty of a Biſhop, in that ſingle point, of managing the widows; who were ſo meddling, ſo immoral, ſo factious, and ſo clamorous, that this alone was enough to employ a Biſhop's prudence, and exerciſe his patience. From that, and another article relating to it concerning the virgins, he goes to conſider the trouble, the difficulties and cenſures that Biſhops were ſubject to, by the hearing of cauſes that were referred to them; many pretending they were wronged by their judg

'ments, made ſhipwreck of the faith in revenge: and 'they preſſed ſo hard upon the Biſhop's time, that it 'was not poſſible for him to content them, and diſ-'charge the other parts of his duty. Then he reckons 'up the many viſits that were expected from Biſhops, 'the ſeveral civilities they were obliged to; which it 'was hard to manage ſo, as not to be either too much 'or too little in them: matter of cenſure would be 'found in both extremes. Then he reflects on the 'great temper that ought to be obſerved in the final 'ſentence of excommunication; between a gentleneſs 'to vice on the one hand, and the driving men to de-'ſpair and apoſtacy on the other. And he concludes 'that book with reflections on the vaſt burden that 'follows the care of ſouls. In his fourth book he runs 'through a variety of arts and profeſſions, and ſhews 'how much ſkill and labour was neceſſary for every one 'of them: from whence he concludes ſtrongly, that 'much more was neceſſary for that which was the moſt 'important of all others; ſo that no conſideration 'whatſoever ſhould make a man undertake it, if he did 'not find himſelf in ſome ſort qualified for it: more 'particularly, he ought to be ready to give an account 'of his faith, and to ſtop the mouths of all gainſayers, 'Jews, Gentiles, and heretics; in which the ignorance 'of many Biſhops, carrying things from one extreme 'to another, had given great occaſion to errors. A 'Biſhop muſt underſtand the ſtile and phraſe of the

'ſcriptures well. From this he runs out into a very 'noble panegyric upon St. Paul, in whom a pattern was 'ſet to all Biſhops. His fifth book ſets out the labour 'of preaching, the temptations to vanity in it, the cen-'ſures that were apt to be made if there was either too 'much or too little art or eloquence in ſermons. To 'this he adds the great exactneſs that a Biſhop ſhould 'uſe in preſerving his reputation, yet without vanity, 'obſerving a due temper between deſpiſing the cenſures 'of the multitude, and the ſervile courting of applauſes. 'In his ſermons he ought, above all things, to ſtudy to 'edify, but not to flatter his hearers, or to uſe vain arts 'to raiſe eſteem or admiration from them. Since a 'Biſhop, whoſe mind was not purged from this diſeaſe, 'muſt go through many toſſings, and be much diſquiet-'ed. And upon that he runs out ſo fully upon the 'temptations to deſire applauſe for eloquence, and a 'readineſs in ſpeaking, that it plainly appears that he 'felt that to be his own weak ſide. The ſixth book is 'chiefly employed to ſhew how much harder a thing 'it was to govern the church, than to live in a deſart 'under the ſevereſt mortifications.'

I will go no further in this abſtract; I hope I have drawn out enough to give a curioſity to ſuch as have not yet read thoſe excellent books, to do it over and over again: for to any that has a true reliſh, they can never be too often read: every reading will afford a freſh pleaſure, and new matter of inſtruction and medi-

tation. But I go, in the laſt place, to offer St. Jerom's ſenſe in this matter. I ſhall not bring together what lies ſcatter'd through his works upon this argument, nor ſhall I quote what he writ in his youth upon it, when the natural flame of his temper, join'd with the heat of youth, might make him carry his thoughts further than what human nature could bear: but I ſhall only give an abſtract of that which he writ to Nepotion on this head in his old age, as he ſays himſelf, a good part of that epiſtle being a reflection upon the different ſenſe that old age gives of theſe things, from that which he felt during the ardour of youth.

He begins with the title Clerk, which ſignifying a lot or portion, 'Imports either that the clergy are God's 'portion, or that God is theirs, and that therefore they 'ought to poſſeſs God, and be poſſeſſed of him. He 'that has this portion muſt be ſatisfied with it, and pre-'tend to nothing but having food and raiment, be there-'with content, and (as men carried their croſſes naked, 'ſo) to be ready to carry his. He muſt not ſeek the 'advantages of this world in Chriſt's warfare. Some 'Clerks grew richer under Chriſt, who made himſelf 'poor, than ever they could have been if they had con-'tinued in the ſervice of the God of this world; ſo 'that the church groaned under the wealth of thoſe 'who were beggars before they forſook the world. 'Let the ſtrangers and the poor be fed at your tables, 'ſays he, and in theſe you entertain Chriſt himſelf.

'When you ſee a trafficking Clerk, who from being 'poor grows rich, and from being mean becomes great, 'fly from him as from a plague. The converſation of 'ſuch men corrupted good minds; they ſought after 'wealth, and loved company, the public places of con-'verſation, fairs, and market-places; whereas a true 'Clerk loves ſilence and retirement. Then he gives 'him a ſtrong caution againſt converſing with women, 'and in particular againſt all thoſe mean compliances 'which ſome of thoſe Clerks uſed towards rich women, 'by which they got not only preſents during their lives, 'but legacies by their wills. That abuſe had grown to 'ſuch an intolerable exceſs, that a law was made, ex-'cluding Prieſts from having any benefit by teſtaments. 'They were the only perſons that were put under that 'incapacity. Heathen Prieſts were not included in the 'law, yet he does not complain of the law, but of thoſe 'who had given juſt occaſion for making it. The laws 'of Chriſt had been contemn'd, ſo it was neceſſary to 'reſtrain them by human laws. It was the glory of a 'Biſhop to provide for the poor, but it was the re-'proach of a Prieſt to ſtudy the enriching of himſelf. 'He reckons up many inſtances of the baſe and abject 'flattery of ſome Clerks, to gain upon rich and dying 'perſons, and to get their eſtates. Next, he exhorts 'him to the conſtant and diligent ſtudy of the ſcrip-'tures; but to be ſure to do nothing that ſhould con-'tradict his diſcourſes, or give occaſion to his hearers

'to anſwer him thus, 'Why do not you do as you "ſay?' Then he ſpeaks of the union that ought to be 'between the Biſhop and his clergy: the affection on 'the one ſide, and the obedience on the other. In 'preaching he muſt not ſtudy to draw applauſes, but 'groans from his hearers. Their tears was the beſt 'ſort of commendation of a ſermon, in which great 'care was to be taken to avoid the methods of the 'ſtage, or of common declamations. Great uſe was to 'be made of the ſcriptures. The myſteries of our faith 'and the ſacraments of our religion ought to be well 'explained: grimaces and ſolemn looks are often 'made uſe of to give weight and authority to that 'which has none in itſelf. He charges him to uſe a 'plain ſimplicity in his habit, neither ſhewing too much 'nicety on the one hand, that favours of luxury, nor 'ſuch a neglect on the other, as might favour of affec-'tation. He recommends particularly the care of the 'poor to him. Then he ſpeaks of clergy-mens mutual-'ly preferring one another; conſidering that there are 'different members in one body, and that every one 'has his own function and peculiar talent: and that 'therefore no man ought to over-value his own, or un-'der-value his neighbour's. A plain Clerk ought not 'to value himſelf upon his ſimplicity and ignorance, 'nor ought a learned and eloquent man to meaſure his 'holineſs by his rhetoric; for indeed of the two, a holy 'ſimplicity is much more valuable, than unſanctified

'eloquence. He ſpeaks againſt the affectation of mag-
'nificence and riches, in the worſhip of God, as things
'more becoming the pomp of the Jewiſh religion, than
'the humility of the ſpiritual doctrine of Chriſt. He
'falls next upon the high and ſumptuous way of living
'of ſome Prieſts, which they pretended was neceſſary
'to procure them the reſpect that was due to them,
'and to give them intereſt and credit: but the world,
'at leaſt the better part of it, would always value a
'Prieſt more for his holineſs, than for his wealth. He
'charges him ſtrictly to avoid all the exceſſes of wine,
'and in oppoſition to that to faſt much, but without ſu-
'perſtition, or a nicety in the choice of ſuch things as
'he was to live on in the time of faſting. Some ſhewed
'a trifling ſuperſtition in thoſe matters, as well as va-
'nity and affectation that was indeed ſcandalous. Plain
'and ſimple faſting was deſpiſed, as not ſingular nor
'pompous enough for their pride. For it ſeems by
'what follows, that the clergy was then corrupted
'with the ſame diſorders, with which our Saviour had
'reproached the Phariſees, while they did not ſtudy
'inward purity, ſo much as outward appearances;
'nor the pleaſing of God, ſo much as the praiſe of
'men. But here he ſtops ſhort, for it ſeems he went
'too near the deſcribing ſome eminent man in that
'age. From that he turns to the government of a
'Prieſt's tongue: he ought neither to detract from any
'one himſelf, nor to encourage ſuch as did: the very

' hearkening to ſlander was very unbecoming. They
' ought to viſit their people, but not to report in one
' place what they obſerv'd in another; in that they
' ought to be both diſcreet and ſecret. Hippocrates
' adjured thoſe that came to ſtudy from him, to be ſe-
' cret, grave, and prudent in their whole behaviour;
' but how much more did this become thoſe, to whom
' the care of ſouls was truſted? He adviſes him to vi-
' ſit his people rather in their afflictions, than in their
' proſperity; not to go too often to their feaſts, which
' muſt needs leſſen him that does it too much. He, in
' the laſt place, ſpeaks very ſeverely of thoſe who ap-
' plied the wealth of the church to their own private
' uſes. It was theft to defraud a friend, but it was ſa-
' crilege to rob the church. It was a crime that exceed-
' ed the cruelty of high-way men, to receive that which
' belonged indeed to the poor, and to withdraw any
' part of it to one's private occaſions. He concludes
' with this excuſe, that he had named no perſon, he
' had not writ to reproach others; but to give them
' warning. And therefore ſince he had treated of the
' vices of the clergy in general terms, if any was of-
' fended with him for it, he thereby plainly confeſſed
' that he himſelf was guilty.

CHAP. V.

An account of ſome canons in divers ages of the church, relating to the duties and labours of the clergy.

I WILL go no further in gathering quotations, to ſhew the ſenſe that the fathers had in theſe matters; theſe are both ſo full and ſo expreſs, that I can find none more plain and more forcible. I ſhall to theſe add ſome of the canons that have been made both in the beſt and in the worſt ages of the church, obliging Biſhops and other Clerks to reſidence, and to be contented with one cure. In that at Sardica that met in the year 347, conſiſting of above 350 Biſhops, two canons were made (the 11th and the 12th) againſt 'Biſhops who without any er-'gent neceſſity, or preſſing buſineſs, ſhould be abſent 'from their church above three weeks, and thereby 'grieve the flock that was committed to their care:' And even this proviſion was made, becauſe Biſhops had eſtates lying out of their dioceſſes; therefore they were allowed to go and look after them, for three weeks, 'in which time they were to perform the divine 'function in the churches to which thoſe eſtates be-'longed.'

Many proviſions were alſo made againſt ſuch as went to court, unleſs they were called by the Emperors, or

went by a deputation from the church upon a public account. There is not any one thing more frequently provided againſt, than that any of the clergy ſhould leave their church, and go to any other church, or live any where elſe without the Biſhop's leave and conſent; nor is there any thing clearer from all the Canons of the firſt ages, than that they conſidered the clergy of every church as a body of men dedicated to its ſervice; that lived upon the oblations of the faithful, and that was to labour in the ſeveral parts of the eccleſiaſtical miniſtry, as they ſhould be ordered by the Biſhop.

In the 4th general council at Chalcedon, pluralities do firſt appear: for they are mentioned and condemned in the 10th canon, which runs thus, 'No Clerk ſhall at 'the ſame time belong to two churches; to wit, to that 'in which he was firſt ordained, and that to which as 'being the greater, he has gone, out of a deſire of vain 'glory; for ſuch as do ſo, ought to be ſent back to 'that church in which they were at firſt ordained, and 'to ſerve there only; but if any has been tranſlated 'from one church to another, he ſhall receive nothing 'out of his former church; nor out of any chapel or 'alms-houſe belonging to it: and ſuch as ſhall tranſ-'greſs this definition of this general council, are con-'demned by it, to be degraded.' I go next to a worſe ſcene of the church, to ſee what proviſions were made in this matter about the 8th century, both in the eaſt and in the weſt: the worſe that thoſe ages and councils

were, it makes the argument the ſtronger: ſince even bad men in bad times, could not juſtify or ſuffer ſuch an abuſe.

In the year 787. the ſecond council of Nice was held, that ſettled the worſhip of images. The 15th canon of it runs thus. 'No Clerk ſhall from henceforth 'be reckoned in two churches,' (for every church had a catalogue of its clergy, by which the dividends were made) 'for this is the character of trafficking, and co-'vetouſneſs, and wholly eſtranged from the eccleſiaſti-'cal cuſtom. We have heard from our Saviour's own 'words, that 'no man can ſerve two maſters; for he "will either hate the one or love the other, or cleave to "the one and deſpiſe the other: let every one therefore,' 'according to the Apoſtle's words, 'continue in the "vocation in which he is called,' and ſerve in one 'church: for thoſe things which filthy lucre has 'brought into church matters, are contrary to God. 'There is a variety of employments for acquiring the 'neceſſary ſupplies of this life: let every one that pleaſes, make uſe of theſe for furniſhing himſelf: for the 'Apoſtle ſays, 'theſe hands miniſtred to my neceſſities,' 'and to thoſe that were with me. This ſhall be the 'rule in this town, which is guarded by God; but in 'remote villages an indulgence may be granted, by rea-'ſon of the want of men.' It is upon this that the Canoniſts do found the firſt of the two reaſons, for which only they allow that a diſpenſation for holding two be-

nefices may be lawful, one is, the want of fit and ſufficient men for the ſervice of the church. The foundation of the other will be found in the canon, which I ſhall next ſet down.

It is the 49th canon of the ſixth council at Paris, under Lewis the Good, in the year 829. This council came after a great many, that had been held by Charles the Great and his ſon, for purging out abuſes, and for reſtoring the primitive diſcipline. Theſe councils ſat at Frankfort, Ments Aken, Rheims, Chalons, Tours, Arles, and this of Paris was the laſt that was held upon that deſign. In theſe, all the primitive canons relating to the lives and labours, and the government of the clergy, were renewed. Among others is that of Chalcedon formerly mentioned; but it ſeems there was no occaſion given to make a ſpecial one againſt pluralities, before this held at Paris, which conſiſted of four provinces of France, Rheims, Sens, Tours, and Rouen. The canon runs thus: 'As it becomes every city to 'have its proper Biſhop; ſo it is alſo becoming and ne'ceſſary that every church dedicated to God, ſhould 'have its proper Prieſt. Yet covetouſneſs which is ido'latry (of which we are much aſhamed) has ſo got 'hold of ſome Prieſts and caught them captives in its 'fetters, that they, blinded with it, know neither whi'ther they go nor what they ought to be or do; ſo 'that they being kindled with the fire of covetouſneſs, 'and forgetful of the prieſtly dignity, neglecting the

'care of thoſe churches to which they were promoted, 'do by ſome preſent given or promiſed, procure other 'churches not only from Clerks, but from lay-men, in 'which they do againſt law undertake to perform 'the miniſtry of Chriſt. It is not known whether their 'Biſhops are conſulted in this matter, or not; if they 'are, without doubt their Biſhops become partakers of 'their ſin: but if they preſume to do it without con-'ſulting them, yet it is to be imputed to the Biſhop's 'negligence. There is ſcarce a Prieſt to be found who 'warreth worthily and diligently in that church in 'which he is dedicated to the divine ſervice: but how 'much leſs will he be able to do that worthily in two, 'three or more churches? This practiſe brings a re-'proach on the chriſtian religion, and a confuſion on 'the prieſtly order. The covetouſneſs of the Clergy 'is cenſured by their people; the worſhip of God is 'not performed in places conſecrated to him; and as 'was obſerved in the former chapters, the ſouls of the 'people are thereby much endangered. Wherefore 'we do all unanimouſly appoint, that no Biſhop ſuffer 'this to be done in his pariſh' (or Dioceſe, theſe words being uſed promiſcouſly) 'any more; and we 'decree, that every church that has a congregation 'belonging to it, and has means by which it may ſub-'ſiſt, ſhall have its proper Prieſt; for if it has a con-'gregation, but has not means by which it may ſubſiſt, 'that matter is left to the Biſhop, to conſider whether

'it can or ought to be ſupported or not. But it is ſpeci-
'ally recommended to their care, to ſee that under
'this pretence, no Prieſt may out of covetouſneſs hold
'two or three churches, in which he cannot ſerve, nor
'perform the worſhip of God.' The laſt proviſions in this canon, are the grounds upon which the Canoniſts found the ſecond juſt cauſe of diſpenſing with pluralities, which is when a church is ſo poor, that the profits which ariſe out of it cannot afford a competent maintenance to a Clerk: but then the queſtion ariſes what is a competent maintenance: this, they do all bring very low, to that which can juſt maintain him: and they have ſo clogged it, that no pretence ſhould be given by ſo general a word, to covetouſneſs, voluptuouſneſs or ambition. And indeed while we have ſo many poor churches among us, inſtead of reſtraining ſuch pluralities, it were rather to be wiſhed that it were made eaſier than by law it is at preſent, either to unite them together, or to make one man capable of ſerving two churches, when both benefices make but a tolerable ſubſiſtance, rather than to be forced to have a greater number of Clerks than can be decently maintain'd; ſince it is certain, that it is more for the intereſt of religion, and for the good of ſouls, to have one worthy man ſerving two churches, and dividing himſelf between them, than to have Clerks for many benefices, whoſe ſcandalous proviſions make too many ſcandalous incumbents, which is one of the greateſt diſeaſes and miſeries of this church.

'care of thoſe churches to which they were promoted, 'do by ſome preſent given or promiſed, procure other 'churches not only from Clerks, but from lay-men, in 'which they do againſt law undertake to perform 'the miniſtry of Chriſt. It is not known whether their 'Biſhops are conſulted in this matter, or not; if they 'are, without doubt their Biſhops become partakers of 'their ſin: but if they preſume to do it without con-'ſulting them, yet it is to be imputed to the Biſhop's 'negligence. There is ſcarce a Prieſt to be found who 'warreth worthily and diligently in that church in 'which he is dedicated to the divine ſervice: but how 'much leſs will he be able to do that worthily in two, 'three or more churches? This practiſe brings a re-'proach on the chriſtian religion, and a confuſion on 'the prieſtly order. The covetouſneſs of the Clergy 'is cenſured by their people; the worſhip of God is 'not performed in places conſecrated to him; and as 'was obſerved in the former chapters, the ſouls of the 'people are thereby much endangered. Wherefore 'we do all unanimouſly appoint, that no Biſhop ſuffer 'this to be done in his pariſh' (or Dioceſe, theſe words being uſed promiſcouſly) 'any more; and we 'decree, that every church that has a congregation 'belonging to it, and has means by which it may ſub-'ſiſt, ſhall have its proper Prieſt; for if it has a con-'gregation, but has not means by which it may ſubſiſt, 'that matter is left to the Biſhop, to conſider whether

'it can or ought to be ſupported or not. But it is ſpeci-
'ally recommended to their care, to ſee that under
'this pretence, no Prieſt may out of covetouſneſs hold
'two or three churches, in which he cannot ſerve, nor
'perform the worſhip of God.' The laſt proviſions in this canon, are the grounds upon which the Canoniſts found the ſecond juſt cauſe of diſpenſing with pluralities, which is when a church is ſo poor, that the profits which ariſe out of it cannot afford a competent maintenance to a Clerk: but then the queſtion ariſes what is a competent maintenance: this, they do all bring very low, to that which can juſt maintain him: and they have ſo clogged it, that no pretence ſhould be given by ſo general a word, to covetouſneſs, voluptuouſneſs or ambition. And indeed while we have ſo many poor churches among us, inſtead of reſtraining ſuch pluralities, it were rather to be wiſhed that it were made eaſier than by law it is at preſent, either to unite them together, or to make one man capable of ſerving two churches, when both benefices make but a tolerable ſubſiſtance, rather than to be forced to have a greater number of Clerks than can be decently maintain'd; ſince it is certain, that it is more for the intereſt of religion, and for the good of ſouls, to have one worthy man ſerving two churches, and dividing himſelf between them, than to have Clerks for many benefices, whoſe ſcandalous proviſions make too many ſcandalous incumbents, which is one of the greateſt diſeaſes and miſeries of this church.

But a due care in this matter has no relation to the accumulation of livings at great diſtances, (every one of which can well ſupport an incumbent) upon the ſame perſon merely for the making of a family, for the ſupporting of luxury or vanity, or for other baſe and covetous deſigns. But I go next to two of the worſt councils that ever carried the name of general ones, the third and the fourth of the Lateran, that we may ſee what was the ſenſe of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in this matter, notwithſtanding the corruption of thoſe ages. The thirteenth canon of the third Lateran council runs thus: 'Foraſmuch as ſome, whoſe covetouſneſs 'has no bounds, endeavour to procure to themſelves 'divers eccleſiaſtical dignities, and ſeveral pariſh-'churches, againſt the proviſions of the holy canons, by 'which means, though they are ſcarce able to perform 'the office of one, they do claim the proviſions due to 'many; we do ſeverely require, that this may not be 'done for the future: and therefore, when any church 'or eccleſiaſtical miniſtry is to be given, let ſuch a one 'be ſought out for it as ſhall reſide upon the place, and 'ſhall be able to diſcharge the care in his own perſon: 'if otherwiſe, he who receives any ſuch benefice, con-'trary to the canons, ſhall loſe it, and he who gave it 'ſhall likewiſe loſe his right of patronage.' This canon not being found effectual to cure ſo great an abuſe, the twenty ninth canon of the fourth council in the Lateran was penned in theſe words: 'It was with great care

'forbidden in the council of the Lateran, that any one 'ſhould have divers eccleſiaſtical dignities, and more 'pariſh-churches than one, which is contrary to the 'holy canons. Otherwiſe he that took them ſhould loſe 'them, and he that gave them ſhould loſe the right of 'giving them: but by reaſon of ſome mens preſumpti-'on and covetouſneſs, that decree has had little or no 'effect hitherto; we therefore deſiring to make a more 'evident and expreſs proviſion againſt theſe abuſes, do 'appoint, that whoſoever ſhall receive any benefice to 'which a cure of ſouls is annexed, ſhall thereupon, by 'law, be deprived of any other ſuch benefice, that he 'formerly had; and if he endeavours ſtill to hold it, he 'ſhall loſe the other likewiſe; and he to whom the 'right of the patronage of his firſt benefice did belong, 'is empowered to beſtow it upon his accepting another; 'and if he delays the beſtowing it above three months, 'not only ſhall his right devolve to another, according 'to the decree of the council in the Lateran, but he 'ſhall be obliged to reſtore to the church to which the 'benefice belongs, all that which he himſelf received 'during the vacancy. This we do likewiſe decree as to 'parſonages, and do further appoint, that no man ſhall 'preſume to hold more dignities or parſonages than one 'in the ſame church, even though they have no cure of 'ſouls annexed to them. Provided always, that diſpen-'ſations may be granted by the Apoſtolical See, to per-'ſons of high birth, or eminently learned (*ſublimes &*

'*literatas perſonas*) or digniſied in univerſities (for ſo 'the word *literati* was underſtood,) who upon occaſion, 'may be honoured with greater benefices. It was by 'this laſt proviſo, that this, as well as all other Canons 'made againſt theſe abuſes, became quite ineffectual; 'for this had no other effect, but the obliging people to 'go to Rome for diſpenſations; ſo that this canon, in-'ſtead of reforming the abuſe, did really eſtabliſh it; 'for the qualifications here mentioned, were ſo far 'ſtretched, that any perſon that had obtained a degree 'in any univerſity, came within the character of letter-'ed, or learned; and all thoſe that were in any depen-'dance upon great men, came likewiſe within the other 'qualification of high rank and birth.

This was the practiſe among us during the reign of Henry VIII. and he, when he was beginning to threaten the ſee of Rome in the matter of his divorce, got that act to be paſſed, which has been the occaſion of ſo much ſcandal and diſorder in this church. It ſeems to one that conſiders it well, that the clauſes which qualify pluralities were grafted upon another bill againſt ſpiritual perſons taking eſtates to farm, with which that act begins: and that in the carrying that on, ſuch a temper ſhew'd it ſelf that the other was added to it. It contain'd indeed a limitation of the papal authority; but ſo many proviſions are made, that the nobility, clergy, and the more eminent of the gentry, Knights in particular, were ſo taken care of, that it could meet with no

great oppoſition in the parliament; but from the ſtate of that time, and from ſeveral clauſes in the act itſelf, it appears it was only intended to be a proviſional act, though it is conceived in the ſtile of a perpetual law. By it then, and by it only (for I have not been able to find that any ſuch act ever paſſed in any kingdom or ſtate in Chriſtendom, many having been made plainly to the contrary in France, declaring the obligation to reſidence to be of divine right) were the abuſes that had riſen out of the canon of one of the worſt councils that ever was authorized and ſettled among us as far as the law of the land can ſettle them. But, after all, it is to be conſidered, that a law does indeed change the legal and political nature of things, it gives a title to a freehold and property; but no human law can change the moral or divine laws, and cancel their authority. If a falſe religion is ſettled by law, it becomes indeed the legal religion, but is not a whit the truer for that. And therefore if the laws of the goſpel oblige Clerks to perſonal labour, as was formerly made out, an act of parliament may indeed qualify a man in law to enjoy the benefice, whether he labours in it or not; but it can never diſſolve his obligation to reſidence and perſonal labour.

But, to bring this chapter to an end, I ſhall only add three decrees that were made by the council of Trent in this matter, that ſo it may appear what proviſions they made againſt abuſes, which are ſtill ſupported by laws among us. A part of the firſt chapter of reformation,

that paſt in the ſixth ſeſſion, runs thus: 'This ſynod 'admoniſhes all that are ſet over any cathedral church-'es, by what title ſoever, that they take heed to them-'ſelves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghoſt 'has ſet them, to govern the church of God which 'he has purchaſed with his own blood, to watch and 'labour, and fulfil their miniſtry, as the Apoſtle has 'commanded: and they muſt know that they cannot do 'this, if, as hirelings, they forſake the flock commit-'ted to them, and do not watch over thoſe ſheep, whoſe 'blood will be required at their hands in the laſt day. 'Since it is certain that no excuſe will be received, if 'the wolf devours the ſheep when the Shepherd does 'not look after them. Yet ſince, to our great grief, it 'is found, that ſome at this time neglect the ſalvation of 'their ſouls, and preferring earthly things to heavenly, 'are ſtill about courts, and forſaking the fold, and the 'care of the ſheep truſted to them, do give themſelves 'wholly to earthly and temporal cares; therefore all 'the ancient Canons, which by the iniquity of times, 'and the corruptions of men, were fallen into deſue-'tude, were renewed againſt non-reſidents.' To which ſeveral compulſory clauſes are added, which are indeed ſlight ones, becauſe the execution of them was entirely put into the Pope's power, and the puniſhment did only lie, if the Biſhop was abſent ſix months in a Year.

This decree did not ſatisfy thoſe who moved for a

reformation; ſo a fuller one was made in the 23d ſeſſion, 1ſt chap. in theſe words: 'Whereas, by the law of 'God, all thoſe to whom the care of ſouls is committed, are commanded to know their ſheep, to offer ſacrifice for them, to feed them by the preaching of the 'word of God, the adminiſtration of the ſacraments, 'and by the example of a good life, to have a tender 'care of the poor, and all other miſerable perſons, and 'to lay themſelves out upon all the other functions of 'the paſtoral care; which cannot be perform'd by thoſe 'who do not watch over, nor are preſent with their 'flock. Therefore this ſynod does admoniſh and exhort 'them, that they, remembring the divine precepts, and 'being made an example to their flock, may feed and 'govern them in righteouſneſs and truth. Upon this 'they declare, that all Biſhops, even Cardinals themſelves, are obliged to perſonal reſidence in their 'church and dioceſe, and there to diſcharge their duty, 'unleſs upon ſome ſpecial occaſions.' By which indeed a door is opened to as many corruptions as the court of Rome thinks fit to diſpenſe with. Yet without this none may be abſent above two, or at moſt three months in the whole year; and even that muſt be upon a juſt reaſon, and without any prejudice to the flock: 'And they 'leave this upon the conſciences of ſuch as withdraw 'for ſo long a time, who they hope will be religious and 'tender in this matter, ſince all hearts are known to 'God, and it is no ſmall ſin to do his work negligently.'

They declare the breaking this decree to be a mortal ſin, and that ſuch as are guilty of it cannot, with a good conſcience, enjoy the mean profits during ſuch their abſence, but are bound to lay them out on the fabrick, or give them to the poor, and all theſe proviſions and puniſhments they do alſo make againſt the inferior clergy, that enjoyed any benefice to which the care of ſouls was annex'd; and the execution of that is put in the Biſhop's hands, who is requir'd not to diſpenſe with their reſidence, unleſs upon a very weighty occaſion, above two months; and in this they give the Biſhop ſo full an authority, that no appeal or prohibition was to lie againſt his ſentence upon non-reſidents, even in the court of Rome. By theſe decrees tho' the papal party hindred a formal declaration of the obligation to reſidence by divine right, that ſo room might be ſtill left for the diſpenſing power; yet they went very near it; they applied paſſages of ſcripture to it, and laid the charge of mortal ſin upon it.

In the laſt place I ſhall ſet down the decree that was made in the 24th ſeſſion, chap. 17. againſt pluralities, in theſe words: 'Whereas the eccleſiaſtical order is 'perverted, when one Clerk has the offices of many 'committed to him, it was therefore well provided by 'the holy canons, that no man ſhould be put into two 'churches. But many, led by their depraved covetouſ-'neſs, deceiving themſelves, but not God, are not 'aſhamed to elude thoſe good conſtitutions by ſeveral

'artifices, and obtain more benefices than one at 'the ſame time: therefore the ſynod, being deſirous 'to reſtore a proper diſcipline for the government of 'churches, does, by this decree, by which all perſons, 'of what rank ſoever, even Cardinals themſelves, ſhall 'be bound, appoint, that, for the future, one man ſhall 'be capable of receiving only one eccleſiaſtical bene-'fice. But if that is not ſufficient for the decent main-'tenance of him that has it, then it ſhall be lawful to 'give him another ſimple benefice, provided that both 'benefices do not require perſonal reſidence. This rule 'muſt be applied not only to cathedrals, but to all o-'ther benefices, whether ſecular, regular, or ſuch as 'are held by commendam, or of what ſort or order ſo-'ever they may be. And as for ſuch as do at preſent 'poſſeſs either more pariſh-churches than one, or one 'cathedral and another pariſh-church, they ſhall be 'forced, notwithſtanding any diſpenſations or unions 'that may have been granted them for term of life, to 'reſign within the ſpace of ſix months all they do now 'hold, except one cathedral, or one parochial church; 'otherwiſe all their benefices, whether parochial or o-'thers, ſhall be by law eſteemed void, and as ſuch they 'ſhall be diſpoſed of to others. Nor may thoſe who 'formerly enjoy'd them receive the mean profits after 'the term of ſix months with a good conſcience. But 'the ſynod wiſhes that ſome due proviſion might be 'made, ſuch as the Pope ſhall think fit, for the neceſſi-

'ties of thoſe who are hereby obliged to reſign.'

Theſe were the decrees that were made by that pretended general council: and whereſoever that council is received, they are ſo ſeldom diſpenſed with, that the ſcandal of non-reſidence, or plurality, does no more cry in that church. In France, tho' that council is not received, yet ſuch regard is had to primitive rules, that it is not heard of among them. Such examples are to us reproaches indeed, and that of the worſt ſort; when the argument, from the neglect of the Paſtoral Care, which gave ſo great an advantage at firſt to the reformers, and turned the hearts of the world ſo much from their careleſs Paſtors to thoſe who ſhewed more zeal and concern for them, is now againſt us, and lies the other way. If the nature of man is ſo made that it is not poſſible but that "offences muſt come; yet, woe "be to him by whom they come."

CHAP. VI.

Of the declared ſenſe and rules of the church of England in this matter.

WHATSOEVER may be the practice of any among us, and whatſoevet may be the force of ſome laws that were made in bad times, and perhaps upon bad ends, yet we are ſure the ſenſe of our church is very

different: ſhe intended to raiſe the obligation of the Paſtoral Care higher than it was before; and has laid out this matter more fully and more ſtrictly than any church ever did in any age, as far at leaſt as my inquiries can carry me. The trueſt indication of the ſenſe of a church, is to be taken from her language in her public offices: this is that which ſhe ſpeaks the moſt frequently, and the moſt publicly; even the articles of doctrine are not ſo much read, and ſo often heard, as her liturgies are. And as this way of reaſoning has been of late made uſe of with great advantage againſt the church of Rome, to make her accountable for all her public offices in their plain and literal meaning; ſo will I make uſe of it on this occaſion: it is the ſtronger in our caſe, whoſe offices being in a tongue underſtood by the people, the argument from them does more evidently conclude here.

In general then this is to be obſerved, that no church before ours, at the reformation, took a formal ſponſion at the altar from ſuch as were ordained Deacons and Prieſts: that was indeed always demanded of Biſhops, but neither in the Roman nor Greek Pontifical, do we find any ſuch ſolemn vows and promiſes demanded or made by Prieſts or Deacons, nor does any print of this appear in the conſtitutions, the pretended Areopagite, or the antient canons of the church. Biſhops were aſked many queſtions, as appears by the firſt canon of the fourth council of Carthage. They were required to

profeſs their faith, and to promiſe to obey the canons, which is ſtill obſerved in the Greek church. The queſtions are more expreſs in the Roman Pontifical; and the firſt of theſe demands a promiſe, 'That they will 'inſtruct their people in the Chriſtian doctrine, accord-'ing to the holy ſcriptures;' which was the foundation upon which our Biſhops juſtified the reformation: ſince the firſt and chief of all their vows binding them to this, it was to take place of all others; and if any other parts of thoſe ſponſions contradicted this, ſuch as their obedience and adherence to the See of Rome, they ſaid that theſe were to be limited by this.

All the account I can give of this general practice of the church, in demanding promiſes only of Biſhops, and not of the other orders, is this, that they conſidered the government of the Prieſts and Deacons as a thing that was ſo entirely in the Biſhop, as it was indeed by the firſt conſtitution, that it was not thought neceſſary to bind them to their duty by any public vows or promiſes (though it is very probable that the Biſhops might take private engagements of them before they ordained them) it being in the Biſhop's power to reſtrain and cenſure them in a very abſolute and ſummary way. But the caſe was quite different in Biſhops, who were all equal by their rank and order; none having any authority over them, by any divine law or the rules of the goſpel; the power of Primates and Metropolitans having ariſen out of eccleſiaſtical and civil laws, and not being

equally great in all countries and provinces; and therefore it was more neceſſary to proceed with greater caution, and to demand a further ſecurity from them.

But the new face of the conſtitution of the church, by which Prieſts were not under ſo abſolute a ſubjection to their Biſhops as they had been at firſt, which was occaſioned partly by the tyranny of ſome Biſhops, to which bounds were ſet by laws and canons; partly by their having a ſpecial property and beneſice of their own, and ſo not being maintained by a dividend out of the common ſtock of the church as at firſt; had ſo alter'd the ſtate of things, that indeed no part of the Epiſcopacy was left entirely in the Biſhop's hands, but the power of ordination. This is ſtill free and unreſtrained; no writs nor prohibitions from civil courts, and no appeals, have clogged or fettered this, as they have done all the other parts of their authority. Therefore our reformers obſerving all this, took great care in reforming the office of ordination; and they made both the charge that is given, and the promiſes that are to be taken, to be very expreſs and ſolemn, that ſo both the ordainers and the ordained might be rightly inſtructed in their duty, and ſtruck with the awe and dread that they ought to be under in ſo holy and ſo important a performance. And though all mankind does eaſily enough agree in this, That promiſes ought to be religiouſly obſerved which men make to one another, how apt ſoever they may be to break them; yet to make the ſenſe of theſe promiſes

go deeper, they are ordered to be made at the altar, and in the nature of a ſtipulation or covenant; the church conferring orders, or indeed rather Chriſt, by the miniſtry of the officers that he has conſtituted, conferring them upon thoſe promiſes that are firſt made. The forms of ordination in the Greek church, which we have reaſon to believe are leſs changed, and more conform to the primitive patterns than thoſe uſed by the Latins, do plainly import that the church only declared the divine vocation. 'The Grace of God, that perfects the 'feeble and heals the weak, promotes this man to be a 'Deacon, a Prieſt, or a Biſhop:' where nothing is expreſſed as conferred, but only as declared; ſo our church, by making our Saviour's words the form of ordination, muſt be conſtrued to intend by that, that it is Chriſt only that ſends, and that the Biſhops are only his miniſters to pronounce his miſſion; otherwiſe it is not ſo eaſy to juſtify the uſe of this form, 'Receive the Holy Ghoſt;' which as it was not uſed in the primitive church, nor by the Roman, till within theſe 500 years, ſo in that church it is not the form of ordination, but a benediction given by the Biſhop ſingly, after the orders are given by the Biſhop and the other Prieſts joining with him: for this is done by him alone as the final conſummation of the action. But our uſing this as the form of ordination, ſhews, that we conſider ourſelves only as the inſtruments that ſpeak in Chriſt's name and words; inſinuating thereby that he only ordains. For

ſuant to this in the ordaining of Prieſts, the queſtions are put 'in the name of God and of his church,' which makes the anſwers to them to be of the nature of vows and oaths: ſo that if men do make conſcience of any thing, and if it is poſſible to ſtrike terror into them, the forms of our ordinations are the moſt effectually contrived for that end that could have been framed.

The firſt queſtion that is put in the office of Deacons, is, 'Do you truſt that you are inwardly moved 'by the Holy Ghoſt to take upon you this office, to ſerve 'God for the promoting of his glory, and the edifying 'of his people?' To which he is to anſwer, 'I truſt 'ſo.' This is put only in this office, and not repeated afterwards, it being juſtly ſuppoſed that where one has had this motion, all the other orders may be in time conferred purſuant to it: but this is the firſt ſtep by which a man dedicates himſelf to the ſervice of God, and therefore it ought not to be made by any that has not this divine vocation. Certainly the anſwer that is made to this ought to be well conſidered; for if any ſays, 'I truſt ſo,' that yet knows nothing of any ſuch motion, and can give no account of it, he lies to the Holy Ghoſt, and makes his firſt approach to the altar with a lye in his mouth, and that not to men, but to God: and how can one expect to be received by God, or be ſent and ſealed by him, that dares do a thing of ſo crying a nature, as to pretend that he truſts he has this motion, who knows that he has it not, who has

made no reflections on it, and when aſked what he means by it, can ſay nothing concerning it, and yet he dares venture to come and ſay it before God and his church. If a man pretends a commiſſion from a Prince, or indeed from any perſon, and acts in his name upon it, the law will fall on him, and puniſh him; and ſhall the Great God of heaven and earth be thus vouched, and his motions be pretended to, by thoſe whom he has neither called or ſent? And ſhall not he reckon with thoſe who dare to run without his miſſion, pretending that they truſt they have it, when perhaps they underſtand not the importance of it; nay, and perhaps ſome laugh at it, as an enthuſiaſtical queſtion, who yet will go through with the office? They come to Chriſt for the loaves; they hope to live by the altar and the goſpel, how little ſoever they ſerve at the one, or preach the other; therefore they will ſay any thing that is neceſſary for qualifying them to this, whether true or falſe. It cannot be denied but that this queſtion carries a ſound in it that ſeems a little too high, and that may rather raiſe ſcruples, as importing ſomewhat that is not ordinary, and that ſeems to ſavour of Enthuſiaſm; and therefore it was put here, without doubt, to give great caution to ſuch as come to the ſervice of the church. Many may be able to anſwer it truly according to the ſenſe of the church, who may yet have great doubting in themſelves concerning it; but every man that has it not, muſt needs know that he has it not.

The true meaning of it muſt be reſolved thus: the motives that ought to determine a man to dedicate himſelf to the miniſtring in the church, are a zeal for promoting the glory of God, for raiſing the honour of the Chriſtian religion, for the making it to be better underſtood, and more ſubmitted to. He that loves it, and feels the excellency of it in himſelf, that has a due ſenſe of God's goodneſs in it to mankind, and that is entirely poſſeſſed with that, will feel a zeal within himſelf, for communicating that to others; that ſo the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom he has ſent, may be more univerſally glorified, and ſerved by his creatures. And when to this he has added a concern for the ſouls of men, a tenderneſs for them, a zeal to reſcue them from endleſs miſery, and a deſire to put them in the way to everlaſting happineſs; and from theſe motives, feels in himſelf a deſire to dedicate his life and labours to thoſe ends; and in order to them, ſtudies to underſtand the ſcriptures, and more particularly the New Teſtament, that from thence he may form a true notion of this holy religion, and ſo be an able miniſter of it: this man, and only this man, ſo moved and ſo qualified, can, in truth, and with a good conſcience, anſwer, that he 'truſts he is inwardly moved by the 'Holy Ghoſt:' and every one that ventures on the ſaying it without this, is a ſacrilegious prophaner of the name of God, and of his holy Spirit: he breaks in upon his church, not to feed it but to rob it: and it is

certain that he who begins with a lie, may be ſent by the father of lies; but he cannot be thought to enter in by the door, who prevaricates in the firſt word that he ſays in order to his admittance.

But if the office of Deacons offers no other particular matter of reflection, the office of ordaining Prieſts has a great deal; indeed the whole of it is calculated to the beſt notions of the beſt times. In the charge that is given, the figures of Watchmen, Shepherds, and Stewards, are purſued, and the places of ſcripture relating to theſe are applied to them: 'They are required to 'have always printed in their remembrance, how great 'a treaſure was committed to their charge: the church 'and congregation whom they muſt ſerve, is his ſpouſe 'and body. Then the greatneſs of the fault of their 'negligence, and the horrible puniſhment that will fol-'low upon it, is ſet before them, in caſe the church, 'or any member of it, take any hurt or hindrance by 'reaſon of it. They are charged never to ceaſe their 'labour, care, and diligence, till they have done all 'that lieth in them, according to their bounden duty, 'towards all ſuch as are or ſhall be committed to their 'care, to bring them to a ripeneſs and perfection of 'age in Chriſt.' They are again urged to 'conſider 'with what care and ſtudy they ought to apply them-'ſelves to this; to pray earneſtly for God's holy Spi-'rit, and to be ſtudious in reading and learning of the 'ſcriptures; and to forſake and ſet aſide, as much as

'they may, all worldly cares and ſtudies. It is hoped 'that they have clearly determined, by God's grace, to 'give themſelves wholly to this vocation; and as much 'as lieth in them to apply themſelves wholly to this 'one thing, and to draw all their cares and ſtudies this 'way, and to this end; and that by their daily reading 'and weighing the ſcriptures, they will ſtudy to wax 'riper and ſtronger in their miniſtry.' Theſe are ſome of the words of the preparatory charge given by the Biſhop when he enters upon this office, before he puts the queſtions that follow to thoſe who are to be ordained. What greater force or energy could be put in words, than is in theſe? Or where could any be found that are more weighty and more expreſs, to ſhew the entire dedication of the whole man, of his time and labours, and the 'ſeparating himſelf from all other cares 'to follow this one thing with all poſſible application 'and zeal?' There is nothing in any office, antient or modern, that I ever ſaw, which is of this force, ſo ſerious and ſo ſolemn; and it plainly implies not only the ſenſe of the church upon this whole matter, but likewiſe their deſign who framed it, to oblige Prieſts, notwithſtanding any relaxation that the laws of the land had ſtill favoured, by the firmeſt and ſacredeſt bonds poſſible, to attend upon their flocks, and to do their duties to them. For a bare reſidence, without labouring, is but a mock reſidence; ſince the obligation to it is in order to a further end, that they may 'watch over

certain that he who begins with a lie, may be ſent by the father of lies; but he cannot be thought to enter in by the door, who prevaricates in the firſt word that he ſays in order to his admittance.

But if the office of Deacons offers no other particular matter of reflection, the office of ordaining Prieſts has a great deal; indeed the whole of it is calculated to the beſt notions of the beſt times. In the charge that is given, the figures of Watchmen, Shepherds, and Stewards, are purſued, and the places of ſcripture relating to theſe are applied to them: 'They are required to 'have always printed in their remembrance, how great 'a treaſure was committed to their charge: the church 'and congregation whom they muſt ſerve, is his ſpouſe 'and body. Then the greatneſs of the fault of their 'negligence, and the horrible puniſhment that will fol-'low upon it, is ſet before them, in caſe the church, 'or any member of it, take any hurt or hindrance by 'reaſon of it. They are charged never to ceaſe their 'labour, care, and diligence, till they have done all 'that lieth in them, according to their bounden duty, 'towards all ſuch as are or ſhall be committed to their 'care, to bring them to a ripeneſs and perfection of 'age in Chriſt.' They are again urged to 'conſider 'with what care and ſtudy they ought to apply them-'ſelves to this; to pray earneſtly for God's holy Spi-'rit, and to be ſtudious in reading and learning of the 'ſcriptures; and to forſake and ſet aſide, as much as

'they may, all worldly cares and ſtudies. It is hoped 'that they have clearly determined, by God's grace, to 'give themſelves wholly to this vocation; and as much 'as lieth in them to apply themſelves wholly to this 'one thing, and to draw all their cares and ſtudies this 'way, and to this end; and that by their daily reading 'and weighing the ſcriptures, they will ſtudy to wax 'riper and ſtronger in their miniſtry.' Theſe are ſome of the words of the preparatory charge given by the Biſhop when he enters upon this office, before he puts the queſtions that follow to thoſe who are to be ordained. What greater force or energy could be put in words, than is in theſe? Or where could any be found that are more weighty and more expreſs, to ſhew the entire dedication of the whole man, of his time and labours, and the 'ſeparating himſelf from all other cares 'to follow this one thing with all poſſible application 'and zeal?' There is nothing in any office, antient or modern, that I ever ſaw, which is of this force, ſo ſerious and ſo ſolemn; and it plainly implies not only the ſenſe of the church upon this whole matter, but likewiſe their deſign who framed it, to oblige Prieſts, notwithſtanding any relaxation that the laws of the land had ſtill favoured, by the firmeſt and ſacredeſt bonds poſſible, to attend upon their flocks, and to do their duties to them. For a bare reſidence, without labouring, is but a mock reſidence; ſince the obligation to it is in order to a further end, that they may 'watch over

'and feed their flock,' and not enjoy their benefices only as farms or as livings, according to the groſs, but common abuſe of our language, by which the names of Cures, Pariſhes, or Benefices, which are the eccleſiaſtical names, are now ſwallowed up into that of living, which carries a carnal idea in the very ſound of the word, and I doubt a more carnal effect on the minds of both clergy and laity.

Whatever we may be, our church is free of this reproach; ſince this charge carries their duty as high and as home as any thing that can be laid in words. And it is further to be conſidered, that this is not of the nature of a private exhortation, in which a man of lively thoughts and a warm fancy, may be apt to carry a point too high; it is the conſtant and uniform voice of the church. Nor is it of the nature of a charge, which is only the ſenſe of him that gives it, and to which the perſon to whom it is given is only paſſive: he hears it, but cannot be bound by another man's thoughts or words, further than as the nature of things binds him. But orders are of the nature of a covenant between Chriſt and the Clerks, in which ſo many privileges and powers are granted on the one part, and ſo many duties and offices are promiſed on the other; and this charge being the preface to it, it is ſtipulatory. It declares the whole covenant of both ſides; and ſo thoſe who receive orders upon it are as much bound by every part of it, and it becomes as much their own act, as if they had

pronounced or promiſed it all in the moſt formal words that could be; and indeed the anſwers and promiſes, that are afterwards made, are only the application of this to the particular perſons, for giving them a plainer and livelier ſenſe of their obligation, which yet, in itſelf, was as entire and ſtrong, whether they had made any promiſe by words of their own or not.

But to put the matter out of doubt, let us look a little further into the office, to the promiſes that they make with relation to their flock, even to ſuch 'as are, or ſhall be 'committed to their charge.' They promiſe, 'that by 'the help of the Lord, they will give their faithful di-'ligence always ſo to miniſter the doctrine and ſacra-'ments, and the diſcipline of Chriſt, as the Lord hath 'commanded, and as this realm hath received the ſame, 'according to the commandment of God; ſo that they 'may teach the people committed to their care and 'charge, with all diligence to keep and obſerve the 'ſame.' This does plainly bind to perſonal labour; the mention that is made of what this realm has received being limited by what follows, 'according to the 'commandment of God,' ſhews, that by this is meant the reformation of the doctrine and worſhip that was then received, and eſtabliſhed by law; by which theſe general words, 'the doctrine, and ſacraments, and diſ-'cipline of Chriſt,' to which all parties pretend, are determined to our conſtitution; ſo that though there were ſome diſorders among us, not yet provided againſt

by the laws of the land, this does not ſecure a reſerve for them. This is ſo ſlight a remark, that I ſhould be aſhamed to have made it, if it had not been urged to myſelf, ſlight as it is, to juſtify, in point of conſcience, the claiming all ſuch privileges or qualifications as are ſtill allowed by law. But I go on to the other promiſes: the Clerk ſays, 'He will, by the help of God, be ready, with all faithful diligence, to baniſh and drive away all erroneous and ſtrange doctrines, contrary to God's word, and to uſe both public and private admonitions and exhortations, as well to the ſick as to the whole within his cure, as need ſhall require, and as occaſion ſhall be given.' This is as plainly perſonal and conſtant as words can make any thing; and in this is expreſſed the ſo much neglected, but ſo neceſſary duty, which incumbents owe their flock, in a private way, viſiting, inſtructing and admoniſhing them, which is one of the moſt uſeful and important parts of their duty, how generally ſoever it may be diſuſed or forgotten: theſe being the chief inſtances and acts of 'watching over and feeding the flock,' that is committed to their care. In the next place they promiſe, 'That they will be diligent in prayers, and in reading of the holy ſcriptures, and in ſuch ſtudies as help the knowledge of the ſame, laying aſide the ſtudy of the world and the fleſh.' This ſtill carries on that great notion of the Paſtoral Care, which runs through this whole office; that it is to be a man's entire buſineſs, and is to poſſeſs

both his thoughts and his time. They do further promiſe, 'That they will maintain, and ſet forward, as 'much as lieth in them, quietneſs, peace, and love a-'mong all Chriſtian people, and eſpecially among them 'that are, or ſhall be committed to their charge.'

Theſe are the vows and promiſes that Prieſts make before they can be ordained. And, to compleat the ſtipulation, the Biſhop concludes it with a prayer to God, 'who has given them the will to do all theſe things, to 'give them alſo ſtrength and power to perform the 'ſame; that he may accompliſh his work that he hath 'begun in them, until the time that he ſhall come, at 'the latter day, to judge the quick and the dead.' Upon the whole matter, either this is all a piece of groſs and impudent pageantry, dreſs'd up in grave and lofty expreſſions, to ſtrike upon the weaker part of mankind, and to furniſh the reſt with matter to their prophane and impious ſcorn; or it muſt be confeſs'd that Prieſts come under the moſt formal and expreſs engagements, to conſtant and diligent labour, that can poſſibly be contrived or ſet forth in words. It is upon this that they are ordained; ſo their ordination being the conſummation of this compact, it muſt be acknowledged that, according to the nature of all mutual compacts, a total failure on the one ſide, does alſo diſſolve all the obligation that lay on the other: and therefore thoſe who do not perform their part, that do not reſide and labour, they do alſo, in the ſight of God, forfeit all the autho-

rity and privileges that do follow their orders, as much as a Chriſtian at large, that does not perform his baptiſmal vow, forfeits the rights and benefits of his baptiſm, in the ſight of God; though both in the one and in the other it is neceſſary that, for the preventing of diſorder and confuſion, a ſentence declaratory of excommunication in the one, as of degradation in the other, paſs, before the viſible acts and rights, purſuant to thoſe rites, can be denied.

To all this I will add one thing more, which is, that ſince our book of ordination is a part of our liturgy, and likewiſe a part of the law of the land; and ſince conſtant attendance, and diligent labour is made neceſſary by it, and ſince this law is ſubſequent to the act of the 21ſt of Henry VIII. that qualifies ſo many for pluralities and non-reſidence, and is in plain terms contrary to it; this as ſubſequent does repeal all that it contradicts. It is upon all this a matter that to me ſeems plain, that by this law the other is repeal'd, in ſo far as it is inconſiſtent with it. This argument is by this conſideration made the ſtronger, that the act of King Henry does not enact that ſuch things ſhall be, but only reſerves privileges for ſuch as may be capable of an exemption from the common and general rules. Now, by the principles of law, all privileges or exemptions of that ſort are odious things; and the conſtructions of law lying hard and heavy againſt odious caſes, it appears to me, according to the general grounds of law, very probable

(I ſpeak within bounds when I ſay only probable) that the act of uniformity, which makes the offices of ordination a part of the law of England, is a repeal of that part of the act of King Henry, which qualifies for pluralities. To conclude, whatſoever may be the ſtrength of this plea in bar to that act, if our faith, given to God and his church in the moſt expreſs and plaineſt words poſſible, does bind, if promiſes given at the altar do oblige, and if a ſtipulation, in the conſideration of which orders are given, is ſacred, and of an indiſpenſable obligation, then, I am ſure, this is.

To make the whole matter yet the ſtronger, this office is to be compleated with a communion: ſo that upon this occaſion, that is not only a piece of religious devotion accompanying it, but it is the taking the ſacrament upon the ſtipulation that has been made between the Prieſt and the church: ſo that thoſe who have framed this office, have certainly intended, by all the ways that they could think on, and by the weightieſt words they could chooſe, to make the ſenſe of the Prieſtly function, and of the duties belonging to it, give deep and ſtrong impreſſions to ſuch as are ordained. I have compared with it all the exhortations that are in all the offices I could find, ancient and modern, whether of the Greek or the Latin church; and this muſt be ſaid of ours, without any ſort of partiality to our own forms, that no ſort of compariſon can be made between ours and all the others; and that as much as ours is more

ſimple than thoſe as to its rites and ceremonies, which ſwell up other offices, ſo much is it more grave and weighty in the exhortations, collects, and ſponſions that are made in it. In the Roman Pontifical no promiſes are demanded of Prieſts, but only that of obedience; Biſhops in a corrupted ſtate of the church taking care only of their own authority, while they neglected more important obligations.

In the office of conſecrating Biſhops; as all the ſponſions made by them, when they were ordained Prieſts, are to be conſidered as ſtill binding, ſince the inferior office does not ſtill ſubſiſt in the ſuperior; ſo there are new ones ſuperadded, proportioned to the exaltation of dignity and authority that accompanies that office. In the Roman Pontifical there are indeed queſtions put to a Biſhop, before he is conſecrated; but of all theſe the firſt only is that which has any relation to his flock, which is in theſe words: 'Wilt thou teach the people 'over whom thou art to be ſet, both by thy example 'and doctrine, thoſe things that thou learneſt out of the 'holy ſcriptures?' All the reſt are general, and relate only to his converſation; but not at all to his labours in his dioceſs: whereas, on the contrary, the engagements in our office do regard not only a Biſhop's own converſation, but chiefly his duty to his people: he declares that 'he is determined to inſtruct the people 'committed to his charge, out of the holy ſcriptures: 'that he will ſtudy them, ſo as to be able by them, to

'teach and exhort with wholeſome doctrine; and with-
'ſtand and convince the gain-ſayers: 'that he will be
'ready, with all faithful diligence, to baniſh and drive
'away all erroneous and ſtrange doctrine contrary to
'God's word: and both privately and openly to call
'upon, and encourage others to the ſame: that he will
'maintain and ſet forward, as much as lies in him,
'quietneſs, love, and peace among all men; and cor-
'rect and puniſh ſuch as be unquiet, diſobedient, and
'criminous, within his dioceſs; according to ſuch au-
'thority as he has.' In particular, 'he promiſes to be
'faithful in ordaining, ſending, or laying hands upon
'others: he promiſes alſo to ſhew himſelf to be gentle,
'and merciful for Chriſt's ſake, to poor and needy
'people, and to all ſtrangers deſtitute of help.' Theſe are the covenants and promiſes under which Biſhops are put, which are again re-inforced upon them, in the charge that is given immediately after their conſecration, when the Bible is put in their hands; 'Give
'heed to reading, exhortation, and doctrine: think
'upon the things contained in this book; be diligent in
'them, that the increaſe coming thereby may be mani-
'feſt unto all men. Take heed unto thyſelf, and to
'doctrine, and be diligent in doing them; for by doing
'this thou ſhalt both ſave thyſelf and them that hear
'thee. Be thou to the flock of Chriſt a Shepherd, not
'a Wolf; feed them, devour them not. Hold up the
'weak, heal the ſick, bind up the broken, bring again

'the outcaſts, ſeek the loſt: be ſo merciful, that you 'be not too remiſs; ſo miniſter diſcipline that you for-'get not mercy: that when the chief Shepherd ſhall 'appear, you may receive the never fading crown 'of glory, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.' In theſe words the great lines of our duty are drawn in very expreſſive and comprehenſive terms. We have the ſeveral branches of our function, both as to preaching and governing, very ſolemnly laid upon us: and both in this office, as well as in all the other offices that I have ſeen, it appears, that the conſtant ſenſe of all churches, in all ages, has been, that preaching was the Biſhop's great duty, and that he ought to lay himſelf out in it moſt particularly.

I ſhall only add one advice to all this, before I leave this article of the ſenſe of our church in this matter; both to thoſe who intend to take orders, and to thoſe who have already taken them. As for ſuch as do intend to dedicate themſelves to the ſervice of the church, they ought to read over theſe offices frequently; and to ask themſelves ſolemnly, as in the preſence of God, whether they can with a good conſcience, make thoſe anſwers which the book preſcribes or not? and not to venture on offering themſelves to orders, till they know that they dare and may ſafely do it. Every perſon who looks that way, ought at leaſt on every ordination Sunday, after he has once formed the reſolution of dedicating himſelf to this work, to go over the office ſeriouſly with

himſelf, and to conſider in what diſpoſition or preparation of mind he is, ſuitable to what he finds laid down in it. But I ſhould add to this, that for a year before he comes to be ordained, he ſhould every firſt Sunday of the month read over the office very deliberately; and frame reſolutions, conform to the ſeveral parts of it, and if he can, receive the ſacrament upon it, with a ſpecial ſet of private devotions relating to his intentions. As the time of his ordination draws near, he ought to return the oftner to thoſe exerciſes. It will be no hard task for him to read theſe over every Sunday, during the laſt quarter before his ordination; and to do that yet more ſolemnly, every day of the week in which he is to be ordained; and to join a greater earneſtneſs of faſting and prayer with it on the faſt-days of his Ember-Week.

Here is no hard impoſition. The performance is as eaſy in itſelf, as it will be ſucceſsful in its effects. If I did not conſider, rather what the age can bear, than what were to be wiſhed for, I would add a great many ſevere rules calculated to the notions of the primitive times. But if this advice were put in practice, it is to be hoped, that it would ſet back many who come to be ordained, without conſidering duly, either what it is that they ask, or what it is that is to be asked of them: which ſome do with ſo ſupine a negligence, that we plainly ſee that they have not ſo much as read the office, or at leaſt

that they have done it in ſo ſlight a manner, that they have formed no clear notions upon any part of it, and, leaſt of all, upon thoſe parts to which they themſelves are to make anſwers. And as ſuch a method as I have propoſed would probably ſtrike ſome with a due awe of divine matters, ſo as to keep them at a diſtance till they were in ſome ſort prepared for them; ſo it would oblige ſuch as come to it, to bring along with them a ſerious temper of mind, and ſuch a preparation of ſoul as might make that their orders ſhould be a bleſſing to them, as well as they themſelves ſhould be a bleſſing to the church. It muſt be the greateſt joy of a Biſhop's life, who truly minds his duty in this weighty truſt of "ſen-"ding out labourers into Gods vineyard;" to ordain ſuch perſons, of whom he has juſt grounds to hope that they ſhall do their duty faithfully, in reaping that harveſt. He reckons theſe as his children indeed, who are to be his ſtrength and ſupport, his fellow labourers and helpers, his crown and his glory. But on the other hand, how heavy a part of his office muſt it be to ordain thoſe againſt whom perhaps there lies no juſt objection, ſo that, according to the conſtitution and rules of the church, he cannot deny them; and yet he ſees nothing in them that gives him courage or chearfulneſs. They do not ſeem to have that love to God, that zeal for Chriſt, that tenderneſs for ſouls, that meekneſs and humility, that mortification and deadneſs to the world, that becomes the character and profeſſion which they

undertake; ſo that his heart fails him, and his hands tremble when he goes to ordain them.

My next advice ſhall be to thoſe who are already in orders, that they will, at leaſt four times a year, on the ordination Sundays, read over the offices of the degrees of the church in which they are; and will particularly conſider the charge that was given, and the anſwers that were made by them; and then ask themſelves, as before God, who will judge them at the great day upon their religious performance of them, whether they have been true to them or not, that ſo they may humble themſelves for their errors and omiſſions, and may renew their vows for the future, and ſo to be going on, from quarter to quarter, through the whole courſe of their miniſtry, obſerving ſtill what ground they gain, and what progreſs they make; to ſuch as have a right ſenſe of their duty, this will be no hard performance. It will give a vaſt joy to thoſe who can go through it with ſome meaſure of aſſurance, and find, that, tho' in the midſt of many temptations and of much weakneſs, they are, ſincerely and ſeriouſly, going on in their work to the beſt of their skill, and to the utmoſt of their power: ſo that their conſciences ſay within them, and that without the partialities of ſelf-love and flattery, "Well done, good and faithful ſer-"vant." The hearing of this ſaid within, upon true grounds, being the certaineſt evidence poſſible, that it ſhall be publickly ſaid at the laſt great day. This exer-

ciſe will alſo offer checks to a man that looks for them, and intends both to underſtand his errors, and to cleanſe himſelf from them. It will, upon the whole matter, make clergymen go on with their profeſſion, as the buſineſs and labour of their lives.

Having known the very good effect that this method has had on ſome, I dare the more confidently recommend it to all others.

Before I conclude this chapter, I will ſhew what rules our reformers had prepared with relation to nonreſidence and pluralities; which, tho' they never paſſed into laws, and ſo have no binding force with them, yet in theſe we ſee what was the ſenſe of thoſe that prepared our offices, and that were the chief inſtruments in that bleſſed work of our reformation. The 12th chapter of the title, 'Concerning thoſe that were to be admitted 'to eccleſiaſtical benefices,' runs thus: 'Whereas, 'when many benefices are conferred on one perſon, e- 'very one of theſe muſt be ſerved with leſs order and 'exactneſs, and many learned men, who are not pro- 'vided, are by that means ſhut out; therefore, ſuch as 'examine the perſons who are propoſed for benefices, 'are to ask every one of them, whether he has at that 'time another benefice or not; and if he confeſſes that 'he has, then they ſhall not conſent to his obtaining 'that to which he is preſented, or the firſt benefice ſhall 'be made void, as in caſe of death, ſo that the patron 'may preſent any other perſon to it.' chap. 15. to a-

gainſt diſpenſations, in theſe words: 'No man ſhall 'hereafter be capable of any privilege, by virtue of 'which he may hold more pariſhes than one: but ſuch 'as have already obtained any ſuch diſpenſations for 'pluralities, ſhall not be deprived of the effects of them 'by virtue of this law.' The 14th chapter relates to reſidence, in theſe words: 'If any man, by reaſon of 'age or ſickneſs, is diſabled from diſcharging his duty, 'or if he has any juſt cauſe of abſence for ſome time, 'that ſhall be approved of by the Biſhop, he muſt take 'care to place a worthy perſon to ſerve during his 'abſence. But the Biſhops ought to take a ſpecial care, 'that upon no regard whatſoever any perſon may, upon 'feigned or pretended reaſons, be ſuffered to be longer 'abſent from his pariſh, than a real neceſſity ſhall re-'quire.'

Theſe are ſome of the rules which were then prepared, and happy had it been for our church, if that whole work of the reformation of the eccleſiaſtical law had been then ſettled among us. Then we might juſtly have ſaid, that our reformation was compleat, and not have lamented, as our church ſtill does in the 'Office of 'commination, that the godly diſcipline which was in 'the primitive church is not yet reſtored,' how much and how long ſoever it has been wiſhed for. It is more than probable that we ſhould neither have had any ſchiſms, nor civil wars, if that great deſign had not been abortive. If but the 9th and 20th titles of that work

ciſe will alſo offer checks to a man that looks for them, and intends both to underſtand his errors, and to cleanſe himſelf from them. It will, upon the whole matter, make clergymen go on with their profeſſion, as the buſineſs and labour of their lives.

Having known the very good effect that this method has had on ſome, I dare the more confidently recommend it to all others.

Before I conclude this chapter, I will ſhew what rules our reformers had prepared with relation to non-reſidence and pluralities; which, tho' they never paſſed into laws, and ſo have no binding force with them, yet in theſe we ſee what was the ſenſe of thoſe that prepared our offices, and that were the chief inſtruments in that bleſſed work of our reformation. The 12th chapter of the title, 'Concerning thoſe that were to be admitted 'to eccleſiaſtical benefices,' runs thus: 'Whereas, 'when many benefices are conferred on one perſon, e-'very one of theſe muſt be ſerved with leſs order and 'exactneſs, and many learned men, who are not pro-'vided, are by that means ſhut out; therefore, ſuch as 'examine the perſons who are propoſed for benefices, 'are to ask every one of them, whether he has at that 'time another benefice or not; and if he confeſſes that 'he has, then they ſhall not conſent to his obtaining 'that to which he is preſented, or the firſt benefice ſhall 'be made void, as in caſe of death, ſo that the patron 'may preſent any other perſon to it.' chap. 13. to a-

gainſt diſpenſations, in theſe words: 'No man ſhall 'hereafter be capable of any privilege, by virtue of 'which he may hold more pariſhes than one: but ſuch 'as have already obtained any ſuch diſpenſations for 'pluralities, ſhall not be deprived of the effects of them 'by virtue of this law.' The 14th chapter relates to reſidence, in theſe words: 'If any man, by reaſon of 'age or ſickneſs, is diſabled from diſcharging his duty, 'or if he has any juſt cauſe of abſence for ſome time, 'that ſhall be approved of by the Biſhop, he muſt take 'care to place a worthy perſon to ſerve during his 'abſence. But the Biſhops ought to take a ſpecial care, 'that upon no regard whatſoever any perſon may, upon 'feigned or pretended reaſons, be ſuffered to be longer 'abſent from his pariſh, than a real neceſſity ſhall re-'quire.'

Theſe are ſome of the rules which were then prepared, and happy had it been for our church, if that whole work of the reformation of the eccleſiaſtical law had been then ſettled among us. Then we might juſtly have ſaid, that our reformation was compleat, and not have lamented, as our church ſtill does in the 'Office of 'commination, that the godly diſcipline which was in 'the primitive church is not yet reſtored,' how much and how long ſoever it has been wiſhed for. It is more than probable that we ſhould neither have had any ſchiſms, nor civil wars, if that great deſign had not been abortive. If but the 9th and 20th titles of that work

which treat of the public offices and officers in the church, had become a part of our law, and been duly executed, we ſhould indeed have had matter of glorying in the world.

In the canons of the year 1571, though there was not then ſtrength enough in the church to cure ſo inveterate a diſeaſe, as non-reſidence, yet ſhe expreſſed her deteſtation of it, in theſe words; 'The abſence of a 'paſtor from the Lord's flock, and that ſupine negli-'gence and abandoning of the miniſtry, which we ob-'ſerve in many, is a thing vile in itſelf, odious to the 'people, and pernicious to the church of God: there-'fore we exhort all the paſtors of churches in our 'Lord Jeſus, that they will, as ſoon as poſſible, come 'to their churches, and diligently preach the goſpel, 'and, according to the value of their livings, that they 'will keep houſe, and hoſpitably relieve the poor.' It is true, all this is much leſſened by the laſt words of that article, 'That every year they muſt reſide, at leaſt, 'threeſcore days upon their benefices.' By the canons made at that time, pluralities were alſo limited to twenty miles diſtance. But this was enlarged to thirty miles, by the canons in the year 1597. Yet by theſe the pluraliſt was required to ſpend a good part of the year in both his benefices. And upon this has the matter reſted ever ſince; but there is no expreſs definition made how far that general word of a good part of the year is to be underſtood.

I will not to this add a long invidious hiſtory of all the attempts that have been made for the reforming theſe abuſes, nor the methods that have been made uſe of to defeat them. They have been but too ſucceſsful, ſo that we ſtill groan under our abuſes, and do not know when the time ſhall come in which we ſhall be freed from them. The defenders of thoſe abuſes, who get too much by them to be willing to part with them, have made great uſe of this, that it was the Puritan party that, during Queen Elizabeth and King James the firſt's reign, promoted theſe bills to render the church odious: whereas it ſeems more probable that thoſe who ſet them forward, what invidious characters ſoever their enemies might put them under, were really the friends of the church; and that they intended to preſerve it, by freeing it from ſo crying and ſo viſible an abuſe; which gives an offence and ſcandal that is not found out by much learning or great obſervation, but ariſes ſo evidently out of the nature of things, that a ſmall meaſure of common ſenſe helps every one to ſee it, and to be deeply prejudiced againſt it. But ſince our church has fallen under the evils and miſchiefs of ſchiſm, none of thoſe who divide from us, have made any more attempts this way; but ſeem rather to be not ill pleaſed that ſuch ſcandals ſhould be ſtill among us, as hoping that this is ſo great a load upon our church, that it both weakens our ſtrength and leſſens our authority. It is certainly the intereſt of an enemy, to ſuffer the body to which he oppoſes him-

ſelf to lie under as many prejudices, and to be liable to as much cenſure as is poſſible; whereas every good and wiſe friend ſtudies to preſerve that body to which he unites himſelf, by freeing it from every thing that may render it leſs acceptable and leſs uſeful.

Here I will leave this argument, having, I think, ſaid enough to convince all that have a true zeal to our church, and that think themſelves bound in conſcience to obey its rules, and that ſeem to have a particular jealouſy of the civil powers breaking in too far upon the eccleſiaſtical authority, that there can be nothing more plain and expreſs, than that our church intends to bring all her prieſts under the ſtricteſt obligations poſſible to conſtant and perſonal labour, and that in this ſhe purſues the deſigns and canons, not only of the primitive and beſt times, but even of the worſt ages, ſince none were ever ſo corrupt, as not to condemn thoſe abuſes by canon, even when they maintain'd them in practiſe. She does not only bind them to this, by the charge ſhe appoints to be given, but alſo by the vows and promiſes that ſhe demands of ſuch as are ordained. When all this is laid together, and when there ſtands nothing on the other ſide to balance it, but a law made in a very bad time, that took away ſome abuſes, but left pretences to cover others; can any man, that weighs theſe things together, inthe ſight of God, and that believes he muſt anſwer to him for this at the great day, think, that the one, how ſtrong ſoever it may be in his favour at an

earthly tribunal, will be of any force in that laſt and dreadful judgment? This I leave upon all mens conſciences; hoping that "they will ſo judge themſelves, "that they ſhall not be judged of the Lord."

CHAP. VII.

Of the due preparation of ſuch as may and ought to be put in orders.

THE greateſt good that one can hope to do in this world is upon young perſons, who have not yet taken their ply, and are not ſpoil'd with prejudices and wrong notions. Thoſe who have taken an ill one at firſt, will neither be at the pains to look over their notions, nor turn to new methods; nor will they, by any change of practiſe, ſeem to confeſs that they were once in the wrong: ſo that if matters that are amiſs can be mended or ſet right, it muſt be by giving thoſe that have not yet ſet out, and that are not yet engaged, truer views and juſter ideas of things. I will therefore here lay down the model upon which a Clerk is to be formed, and will begin with ſuch things as ought to be previous and preparatory to his being initiated into orders.

Theſe are of two ſorts, the one is of ſuch preparations as are neceſſary to give his heart and ſoul a right temper, and a true ſenſe of things: the other is of ſuch

ſtudies as are neceſſary to enable him to go through with the ſeveral parts of his duty. Both are neceſſary, but the firſt is the more indiſpenſable of the two; for a man of a good ſoul may, with a moderate proportion of knowledge, do great ſervice in the church, eſpecially if he is ſuited with an employment that is not above his talent: whereas unſanctified knowledge puffs up, is inſolent, unquiet, it gives great ſcandal, and occaſions much diſtraction in the church. In treating of theſe qualifications, I will watch over my thoughts, not to let them riſe to a pitch that is above what the common frailties of human nature, or the age we live in, can bear: and after all, if in any thing I may ſeem to exceed theſe meaſures, it is to be conſidered that it is natural in propoſing the ideas of things to carry them to what is wiſhed for, which is but too often beyond what can be expected; conſidering both the corruption of mankind, and of theſe degenerated times.

Firſt of all then, he that intends to dedicate himſelf to the church, ought, from the time that he takes up any ſuch reſolution, to enter upon a greater decency of behaviour, that his mind may not be vitiated by ill habits, which may both give ſuch bad characters of him, as may ſtick long on him afterwards, and make ſuch ill impreſſions on himſelf, as may not be eaſily worn out or defaced. He ought, above all things, to poſſeſs himſelf with a high ſenſe of the Chriſtian religion, of its truth and excellence, of the value of ſouls, of the dignity of

the paſtoral care, of the honour of God, of the ſacredneſs of holy functions, and of the great truſt that is committed to thoſe who are ſet apart from the world, and dedicated to God and to his church. He who looks this way, muſt break himſelf to the appetites of pleaſure or wealth, of ambition or authority; he muſt conſider that the religion, in which he intends to officiate, calls all men to great purity and virtue, to a probity and innocence of manners, to a meekneſs and gentleneſs, to a humility and ſelf-denial, to a contempt of the world, and a heavenly-mindedneſs, to a patient reſignation to the will of God, and a readineſs to bear the croſs, in the hopes of that everlaſting reward, which is reſerved for Chriſtians in another ſtate; all which was eminently recommended, by the unblemiſh'd pattern that the author of this religion has ſet to all that pretend to be his followers. Theſe being the obligations which a preacher of the goſpel is to lay daily upon all his hearers, he ought certainly to accuſtom himſelf often to conſider ſeriouſly of them; and to think how ſhameleſs and impudent a thing it will be in him, to perform offices ſuitable to all theſe, and that do ſuppoſe them; to be inſtructing the people, and exhorting them to the practice of them; unleſs he is in ſome ſort all this himſelf which he teaches others to be.

Indeed, to be tied to ſuch an employment, while one has not an inward conformity to it, and complacence in it, is both the moſt unbecoming, the moſt unpleaſant,

and the moſt uncomfortable ſtate of life imaginable. Such a perſon will be expoſed to all mens cenſures and reproaches, who when they ſee things amiſs in his conduct, do not only reproach him, but the whole church and body to which he belongs; and which is more, the religion which he ſeems to recommend by his diſcourſes; though his life and actions, which will always paſs for the moſt real declaration of his inward ſentiments, are a viſible and continual oppoſition to it. On all theſe things, he whoſe thoughts carry him toward the church, ought to reflect frequently: nothing is ſo odious as a man that diſagrees with his character; a ſoldier that is a coward, a courtier that is brutal, an ambaſſador that is abject, are not ſuch unſeemly things, as a bad or vicious, a drunken or diſſolute clergy-man. But though his ſcandals ſhould not riſe up to ſo high a pitch, even a proud and paſſionate, a worldy-minded and covetous Prieſt, gives the lye to his diſcourſes ſo palpably, that he cannot expect they ſhould have much weight. Nor is ſuch a man's ſtate of life leſs unpleaſant to himſelf, than it is unbecoming. He is obliged to be often performing offices, and pronouncing diſcourſes, in which if he is not a good man, he not only has no pleaſure, but muſt have a formed averſion to them. They muſt be the heavieſt burden of his life; he muſt often feel ſecret challenges within; and though he as often ſilences theſe, yet ſuch unwelcome reflections are uncomfortable things. He is forced to manage himſelf with a per-

petual conſtraint, and to obſerve a decorum in his deportment, leſt he fall under a more public cenſure. Now to be bound to act a part, and live with reſtraint one's whole life, muſt be a very melancholy thing. He cannot go ſo quite out of ſight of religion and convictions, as other bad men do, who live in a perpetual hurry, and a total forgetfulneſs of divine matters. They have no checks, becauſe they are as ſeldom in the way to find them as is poſſible. But a Clerk cannot keep himſelf out of their way; he muſt remember them, and ſpeak of them, at leaſt upon ſome occaſions, whether he will or no: he has no other way to ſecure himſelf againſt them, but by trying what he can do to make himſelf abſolutely diſbelieve them. Negative atheiſm, that is, a total neglect of all religion, is but too eaſily arrived at; yet this will not ſerve his turn, he muſt build his atheiſm upon ſome bottom, that he may find quiet in it. If he is an ignorant man, he is not furniſhed with thoſe ſlights of wit, and ſhews of learning, that muſt ſupport it: but if he is really learned, he will ſoon be beaten out of them; for a learned atheiſm is ſo hard a thing to be conceived, that unleſs a man's powers are firſt ſtrangely vitiated, it is not eaſy to ſee how any one can bring himſelf to it. There is nothing that can ſettle the quiet of an ill Prieſt's mind and life, but a ſtupid formality, and a callus that he contracts by his inſenſible way of handling divine matters, by which he becomes hardened againſt them. But if this ſettles him

by ſtupifying his own powers, it does put him alſo ſo far out of the reach of conviction, in all the ordinary methods of grace, that it is ſcarce poſſible he can ever be awakened, and by conſequence that he can be ſaved; and if he periſhes, he muſt fall into the loweſt degree of miſery, even to the portion of hypocrites: for his whole life has been a courſe of hypocriſy in the ſtricteſt ſenſe of the word; which is the acting of a part, and the counterfeiting another perſon. His ſins have in them all poſſible aggravations; they are againſt knowledge and againſt vows, and contrary to his character; they carry in them a deliberate contempt of all the truths and obligations of religion: and if he periſhes, he does not periſh alone, but carries a ſhoal down with him, either of thoſe who have periſhed in ignorance, through his neglect, or of thoſe who have been hardened in their ſins, through his ill example. And ſince all this muſt be put to his account, it may be juſtly inferred from hence, that no man can have a heavier ſhare in the miſeries of another ſtate, than profane and wicked Clerks. On all theſe things he ought to employ his thoughts frequently, who intends to dedicate himſelf to God, that ſo he may firmly reſolve not to go on with it, till he feels ſuch ſeeds and beginnings of good things in himſelf, that he has reaſon to hope, that, through the grace and aſſiſtance of God, he will be an example to others.

He ought more particularly to examine himſelf, whether he has that ſoft and gentle, that meek and

umble, and that charitable and compaſſionate temper, which the goſpel does ſo much preſs upon all Chriſtians, hat ſhined ſo eminently through the whole life of the leſſed author of it; and which he has ſo ſingularly ecommended to all his followers; and that has in it o many charms and attractives, which do not only ommend thoſe who have theſe amiable virtues, but, which is much more to be regarded, they give them aſt advantages in recommending the doctrine of our aviour to their people. They are the true ground of hat Chriſtian wiſdom and diſcretion, and of that grave nd calm deportment, by which the clergy ought to arry on and maintain their authority: a haughty and uffing humour, an impatient and inſolent temper, a oſtineſs of deportment, and a peeviſhneſs of ſpirit, renering the lives of the clergy, for the moſt part bitter to hemſelves, and their labours, how valuable ſoever oherwiſe they may be, unacceptable and uſeleſs to their eople. A clergyman muſt be prepared to bear injuries, o endure much unjuſt cenſure and calumny, to ſee imſelf often neglected, and others preferred to him, the eſteem of the people. He that takes all this ill, hat reſents it, and complains of it, does thereby give imſelf much diſquiet: and to be ſure he will, through is peeviſhneſs, rather encreaſe than leſſen that conempt, under which he is ſo uneaſy; which is both etter born, and ſooner overcome by a meek and a lowy temper. A man of this diſpoſition affects no ſingulari-

ties, unleſs the faultineſs of thoſe about him, makes his doing his duty to be a ſingularity: he does not ſtudy to leſſen the value that is due to others, on deſign to encreaſe his own: his low thoughts of himſelf, make that he is neither aſpiring, nor envying ſuch as are advanced: he is prepared to ſtay till God in his providence thinks fit to raiſe him: he ſtudies only to deſerve preferment, and leaves to others the wringing poſts of advantage out of the hands of thoſe that give them. Such a preparation of mind in a clergy-man, diſpoſes him to be happy in whatſoever ſtation he may be put, and renders the church happy in him: for men ſo moulded, even though their talents ſhould be but mean, are ſhining lights, that may perhaps be at firſt deſpiſed, as men of a low ſize, that have not greatneſs of ſoul enough to aſpire; but when they have been ſeen and known ſo long, that all appears to be ſincere, and that the principle from whence this flows, is rightly conſidered, then every thing that they ſay or do, muſt have its due weight: the plaineſt and ſimpleſt things that they ſay have a beauty in them, and will be hearkened to as oracles.

But a man that intends to prepare himſelf rightly for the miniſtry of the church, muſt indeed, above all things, endeavour to break himſelf to the love of the world, either of the wealth, the pomp, or the pleaſures of it. He muſt learn to be content with plain and ſimple diet, and often even abridge that, by true faſting. I do not call faſting a trifling diſtinction of meats,

t a leſſening of the quantity, as well as the quality, d a contracting the time ſpent at meals, that ſo he y have a greater freedom both in his time, and in his oughts; that he may be more alone, and pray and editate more, that what he ſaves out of his meals, he y give to the poor. This is, in ſhort, the true mea- re and right uſe of faſting. In cold climates, an ab- nence till night may create diſorders, and raiſe ſuch a ſturbance both in the appetite, and in the digeſtion; at this managed upon the practices of other countries, pecially in young perſons, may really diſtract, inſtead furthering, thoſe who do it indiſcreetly. In ſhort, ſting, unleſs joined with prayer and alms-giving, is of value in the ſight of God. It is a vaſt advantage to a an to be broken to the niceties of his palate, to be ntent with plain food, and even to diſlike delicacies d ſtudied diſhes. This will make him eaſy in nar- wer circumſtances, ſince a plain bill of fare is ſoon ſcharged. A lover of his appetites, and a ſlave to his ſte, makes but a mean figure among men, and a very urvy one among clergymen.

This deadneſs to the world muſt raiſe one above the ffectations of pomp and ſtate, of attendance and high ving: which to a philoſophical mind will be heavy, hen the circumſtances he is in ſeem to impoſe and orce it on him. And therefore he who has a right enſe, finds it is almoſt all he can do, to bear thoſe hings which the tyranny of cuſtom or falſe opinions

put upon him: ſo far is he from longing for them. A man that is truly dead to the world, would chuſe much rather to live in a lowly and narrow figure, than to be obliged to enter into the methods of the greatneſs of this world; into which, if the conſtitutions and forms of a church and kingdom put him, yet he feels himſelf in an unnatural and uncouth poſture: it is contrary to his own genius and reliſh of things, and therefore he does not court nor deſire ſuch a ſituation; but even while he is in it, he ſhews ſuch a neglect of the ſtate of it, and ſo much indifference and humility in it, that it appears how little power thoſe things have over his mind, and how little they are able to ſubdue and corrupt it. This mortified man muſt likewiſe become dead to all the deſigns and projects of making a family, or of raiſing the fortunes of thoſe that are nearly related to him: he muſt be bountiful and charitable; and tho' it is not only lawful to him, but a neceſſary duty incumbent on him, to make due proviſion for his family, if he has any; yet this muſt be ſo moderated, that no vain nor ſordid deſigns, no indirect or unbecoming arts may mix in it; no exceſſive wealth nor great projects muſt appear; he muſt be contented with ſuch a proportion as may ſet his children in the way of a virtuous and liberal education; ſuch as may ſecure them from ſcandal and neceſſity, and put them in a capacity to ſerve God and their generation in ſome honeſt employment. But he who brings along with him a voluptuous, an am-

ſitious, or a covetous mind, that is carnal and earthly-minded, comes as a 'hireling to feed himſelf, and not the flock; he comes to ſteal and to deſtroy.' Upon all this, great reflection is to be made concerning the motives that determine one to offer himſelf to this employment.

In the firſt beginnings of Chriſtianity, no man could reaſonably think of taking orders, unleſs he had in him the ſpirit of martyrdom. He was to look for nothing in this ſervice, but labour and perſecution: he was indeed to live of the altar, and that was all the portion that he was to expect in this world. In thoſe days an extraordinary meaſure of zeal and devotion was neceſſary to engage men to ſo hard and difficult a province, that, how great ſoever its reward might be in another world, had nothing to look for in this, but a narrow proviſion, and the firſt and largeſt ſhare of the croſs: they were the beſt known, the moſt expoſed, and the ſooneſt fallen upon in the perſecution. But their ſervices and their ſufferings did ſo much recommend that function in the ſucceeding ages, that the faithful thought they could never do enough to expreſs their value for it. The church came to be richly endowed; and though ſuperſtition had raiſed this out of meaſure, yet the extreme went as far to the other hand at the reformation, when the church was almoſt ſtript of all its patrimony, and a great many churches were left ſo poor, that there was not, in moſt places, a ſufficient, nay, not

ſo much as a neceſſary maintenance, reſerved for thoſe that were to miniſter in holy things. But it is to be acknowledged that there are ſuch remnants preſerved, that many benefices of the church ſtill may, and perhaps do but too much work upon mens corrupt principles, their ambition, and covetouſneſs: and it is ſhrewdly to be apprehended, that of thoſe who preſent themſelves at the altar, a great part comes, as thoſe who followed Chriſt, for the loaves, becauſe of the good proſpect they have of making their fortunes by the church.

If this point ſhould be carried too far, it might perhaps ſeem to be a pitch above human nature; and certainly very far above the degeneracy of the age we live in: I ſhall therefore lay this matter with as large an allowance, as I think it can bear. It is certain, that ſince God has made us to be a compound of ſoul and body, it is not only lawful, but ſuitable to the order of nature, for us, in the choice we make of the ſtate of life that we intend to purſue, to conſider our bodies, in the next place after our ſouls: yet we ought certainly to begin with our ſouls, with the powers and faculties that are in them, and conſider well of what temper they are, and what our meaſure and capacity is; that ſo we may chuſe ſuch a courſe of life, for which we ſeem to be fitted, and in which we may probably do the moſt good to ourſelves and others: from hence we ought to take our aim and meaſures chiefly: But in the next

place, we not only may, but ought to consider our bodies, how they shall be maintained in a way suitable to that state of life, into which we are engaged. Therefore tho' no man can, with a good conscience, begin upon a worldly account, and resolve to dedicate himself to the church, merely out of carnal regards; such as an advowson in his family, a friend that will promote him, or any other such like prospect, till he has first consulted his temper and disposition, his talents and his capacities; yet tho' it is not lawful to make the regards of this world his first consideration, and it cannot be denied to be a perfecter state, if a man should offer himself to the church, having whereon to support himself, without any assistance or reward out of its patrimony; and to be nearer to St. Paul's practice, 'whose 'hands ministred to his necessities,' and who reckoned, that in this he had 'whereof to glory, that he was not 'burdensome to the churches:' yet it is without doubt, lawful for a man to design, that he may subsist in and out of the service of the church: but then these designs must be limited to a subsistence, to such a moderate proportion as may maintain one in that state of life; and must not be let fly by a restless ambition, and an insatiable covetousness, as a ravenous bird of prey does at all game. There must not be a perpetual enquiry into the value of benefices, and a constant importuning of such as give them: if laws have been made in some states restraining all ambitus and aspirings to civil employments, certainly it

were much more reaſonable to put a ſtop to the ſcandalous importunities that are every where complained of; and no where more viſible and more offenſive than at court. This gives a prejudice to men, that are otherwiſe inclined enough to ſearch for one, that can never be removed, but by putting an effectual bar in the way of that ſcrambling for benefices and preferments; which will ever make the lay part of mankind conclude, that let us pretend what we will, covetouſneſs and ambition are our true motives, and our chief vocation. It is true, the ſtrange practices of many patrons, and the conſtitution of moſt courts, give a colour to excuſe ſo great an indecency. Men are generally ſucceſsful in thoſe practices; and as long as human nature is ſo ſtrong, as all men feel it to be, it will be hard to divert them from a method which is ſo common, that to act otherwiſe would look like an affectation of ſingularity: and many apprehend, that they muſt languiſh in miſery and neceſſity if they are wanting to themſelves, in ſo general a practice. And indeed if patrons, but chiefly if Princes would effectually cure this diſeaſe, which gives them ſo much trouble as well as offence, they muſt reſolve to diſtribute thoſe benefices that are in their gift, with ſo viſible a regard to true goodneſs and real merit, with ſo firm and conſtant an oppoſition to application and importunity, that it may appear that the only way to advancement, is to live well, to ſtudy hard, to ſtay at home, and labour diligently; and that applications

by the perſons themſelves, or any ſet on by them, ſhall always put thoſe back who make them: this would more effectually cure ſo great an evil, than all that can be ſaid againſt it. One ſucceſsful ſuiter who carries his point, will promote this diſorder more than twenty repulſes of others; for unleſs the rule is ſeverely carried on, every one will run into it, and hope to proſper as well as he, who they ſee has got his end in it. If thoſe who have the diſpoſition of benefices, to which the cure of ſouls is annexed, did conſider this as a truſt lodged with them, for which they muſt anſwer to God; and that they ſhall be in a great meaſure accountable for the ſouls that may be loſt, through the bad choice that they make, knowing it to be bad; if, I ſay, they had this more in their thoughts, than ſo many ſcores of pounds as the living amounts to; and thought themſelves really bound, as without doubt they are, to ſeek out good and worthy men, well qualified and duly prepared, according to the nature of that benefice which they are to give; then we might hope to ſee men make it their chief ſtudy, to qualify themſelves aright; to order their lives, and frame their minds as they ought to do, and to carry on their ſtudies with all application and diligence. But as long as the ſhort methods of application, friendſhip, or intereſt, are more effectual than the long and hard way of labour and ſtudy; human nature will always carry men to go the ſureſt, the eaſieſt, and the quickeſt way to work.

After all, I wish it were well considered by all Clerks, what it is to run without being either called or sent; and so to thrust one's self into the vineyard, without staying till God, by his providence, puts a piece of his work in his hands; this will give a man a vast ease in his thoughts, and a great satisfaction in all his labours, if he knows that no practices of his own, but merely the directions of providence, have put him in a post. He may well trust the effects of a thing to God, when the causes of it do plainly flow from him. And though this will appear to a great many a hard saying, so that few will be able to bear it, yet I must add this to the encouragement and comfort of such as can resolve to deliver themselves up to the conduct and directions of providence, that I never yet knew any one of those few (too few I confess they have been) who were possessed with this maxim, and that have followed it exactly, that have not found the fruit of it even in this world. A watchful care hath hovered over them: instruments have been raised up, and accidents have happened to them so prosperously, as if there had been a secret design of heaven by blessing them so signally, to encourage others to follow their measures, to depend on God, to deliver themselves up to his care, and to wait till he opens a way for their being employed, and settled in such a portion of his husbandry, as he shall think fit to assign to them.

These are preparations of mind, with which a Clerk

is to be formed and ſeaſoned: and in order to this, he muſt read the ſcriptures much, he muſt get a great deal of thoſe paſſages in them that relate to theſe things, by heart, and repeat them often to himſelf; in particular, many of the moſt tender and melting Pſalms, and many of the moſt comprehenſive paſſages in the Epiſtles; that by the frequent reflecting on theſe, he may fill his memory with noble notions, and right ideas of things: the book of Proverbs, but chiefly Eccleſiaſtes, if he can get to underſtand it, will beget in him a right view of the world, a juſt value of things, and a contempt of many objects that ſhine with a falſe luſtre, but have no true worth in them. Some of the books taught at ſchools, if read afterwards, when one is more capable to obſerve the ſenſe of them, may be of great uſe to promote this temper. Tully's offices will give the mind a noble ſet; all his pholoſophical diſcourſes, but chiefly his conſolation; which, though ſome critics will not allow to be his, becauſe they fancy the ſtile has not all the force and beauty in it that was peculiar to him, yet it is certainly the beſt piece of them all: theſe, I ſay, give a good ſavour to thoſe who read them much. The ſatyrical poets, Horace, Juvenal and Perſius, may contribute wonderfully to give man a deteſtation of vice, and a contempt of the common methods of mankind; which they have ſet out in ſuch true colours, that they muſt give a very generous ſenſe to thoſe who delight in reading them often. Perſius his ſecond ſatyr may well paſs

for one of the beſt lectures in divinity. Hierocles upon Pythagoras's verſes, Plutarch's lives; and above all the books of heatheniſm, Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius, contain ſuch inſtructions, that one cannot read them too often, nor repaſs them too frequently in his thoughts. But when I ſpeak of reading theſe books, I do not mean only to run through them, as one does through a book of hiſtory, or of notions; they muſt be read and weighed with great care, till one is become a maſter of all the thoughts that are in them: they are to be often turned in one's mind, till he is thereby wrought up to ſome degrees of that temper, which they propoſe. And as for Chriſtian books, in order to the framing of one's mind aright, I ſhall only recommend The whole Duty of Man, Dr. Sherlock of Death and Judgment, and Dr. Scots's books; in particular, that great diſtinction that runs through them, of the means and of the ends of religion. To all which I ſhall add one ſmall book more, which is to me ever new and freſh, gives always good thoughts and a noble temper: Thomas a Kempis, of the Imitation of Chriſt. By the frequent reading of theſe books, by the reliſh that one has in them, by the delight they give, and the effects they produce, a man will plainly perceive, whether his ſoul is made for divine matters or not; what ſuitableneſs there is between him and them; and whether he is yet touched with ſuch a ſenſe of religion, as to be capable of dedicating himſelf to it.

I am far from thinking that no man is fit to be a Prieſt, that has not the temper which I have been deſcribing, quite up to that height in which I have ſet it forth; but this I will poſitively ſay, that he who has not the ſeeds of it planted in him, who has not theſe principles, and reſolutions formed to purſue them, and to improve and perfect himſelf in them, is in no wiſe worthy of that holy character. If theſe things are begun in him, if they are yet but as a grain of muſtard-ſeed; yet if there is a life in them, and a vital ſenſe of the tendencies and effects they muſt have, ſuch a perſon, ſo moulded, with thoſe notions and impreſſions, and ſuch only are qualified, ſo as to be able to ſay with truth and aſſurance, that they 'truſt they are inwardly 'moved by the Holy Ghoſt to undertake that office.'

So far have I diſpatched the firſt and chief part of the preparation neceſſary before orders. The other branch of it, relates to their learning, and to the knowledge that is neceſſary. I confeſs I look upon this as ſo much inferior to the other, and have been convinced by ſo much experience, that a great meaſure of piety, with a very ſmall proportion of learning, will carry one a great way, that I may perhaps be thought to come as far ſhort in this, as I might ſeem to exceed in the other. I will not here enter into a diſcourſe of theological learning, of the meaſure that is neceſſary to make a compleat divine, and of the methods to attain it. I intend only to lay down here, that which I look on as the loweſt de-

gree, and as that which ſeems indiſpenſably neceſſary, to one that is to be a Prieſt. He muſt then underſtand the New Teſtament well. This is the text of our religion, that which we preach and explain to others; therefore a man ought to read this ſo often over, that he may have an idea of the whole book in his head, and of all the parts of it. He cannot have this ſo ſure, unleſs he underſtands the Greek ſo well, as to be able to find out the meaning of every period in it, at leaſt of the words and phraſes of it; any book of Annotations or Paraphraſe upon it, is a great help to a beginner; Grotius, Hammond, and Lightfoot are the beſt. But the having a great deal of the practical and eaſy parts of it, ſuch as relate to mens lives and their duties, ſuch as ſtrike and awaken, direct, comfort, or terrify, are much more neceſſary than the more abſtruſe parts. In ſhort, the being able to ſtate right the grounds of our hope, and the terms of ſalvation, and the having a clear and ready view of the new covenant in Chriſt Jeſus, is of ſuch abſolute neceſſity, that it is a profaning of orders, and a defiling of the ſanctuary, to bring any into it, that do not rightly underſtand this matter in its whole extent. Biſhop Pearſon on the Creed is a book of great learning, and profound exactneſs. Dr. Barrow has opened it with more ſimplicity; and Dr. Towerſon more practically: one or other of theſe muſt be well read and conſidered. But when I ſay read, I mean read and read over again, ſo oft that one is maſter of one of theſe

books; he must write notes out of them, and make abridgements of them; and turn them so oft in his thoughts, that he must throughly understand, and well remember them. He must read also the Psalms over so carefully, that he may at least have a general notion of those divine hymns; to which Bishop Patrick's Paraphrase will help to carry him.

A system of divinity must be read with exactness: they are almost all alike. When I was young Wendelin and Maresius were the two shortest and fullest. Here is a vast error in the first forming of our clergy, that a contempt has been cast on that sort of books; and indeed to rise no higher, than to a perpetual reading over different systems, is but a mean pitch of learning; and the swallowing down whole systems by the lump, has helped to possess peoples minds too early with prejudices, and to shut them up in too implicite a following of others. But the throwing off all these books, makes that many who have read a great deal, yet have no entire body of divinity in their head; they have no scheme or method, and so are ignorant of some very plain things, which could never have happened to them, if they had carefully read and digested a system into their memories. But because this is indeed a very low form; therefore to lead a man farther, to have a freer view of divinity, to examine things equally and clearly, and to use his own reason, by balancing the various views, that two great divisions of Protestants have, not only in

the points which they controvert, but in a great many others, in which though they agree in the ſame concluſions, yet they arrive at them by very different premiſſes; I would adviſe him that ſtudies divinity, to read two larger bodies, writ by ſome eminent men of both ſides; and becauſe the lateſt are commonly the beſt; Turretin for the whole Calviniſt hypotheſis, and Limburgh for the Arminian, will make a man fully the maſter of all the notions of both ſides. Or if one would ſee how far middle ways may be taken; the theſes of Saumur, or le Blanc's theſes, will compleat him in that. Theſe books well read, digeſted into abſtracts, and frequently reviewed or talked over by two companions in ſtudy, will give a man an entire view of the whole body of divinity.

But by reaſon of that peſt of Atheiſm that ſpreads ſo much among us, the foundations of religion muſt be well laid: Biſhop Wilkin's book of Natural Religion, will lead one in the firſt ſteps, through the principles that he has laid together in a plain and natural method. Grotius his book of the Truth of the Chriſtian Religion, with his Notes upon it, ought to be read and almoſt got by heart. The whole controverſy both of Atheiſm and Deiſm, the arguments both for the Old and New Teſtament, are fully opened, with a great variety both of learning and reaſoning, in Biſhop Stillingfleet's Origines Sacrae.

There remains only to direct a ſtudent how to form

right notions of practical matters; and particularly of preaching. Dr. Hammond's Practical Catechiſm, is a book of great uſe; but not to be begun with, as too many do: it does require a good deal of previous ſtudy, before the force of his reaſonings is apprehended; but when one is ready for it, it is a rare book, and ſtates the grounds of morality, and of our duty, upon true principles. To form one to underſtand the right method of preaching, the extent of it, and the proper ways of application, Biſhop Sanderſon, Mr. Faringdon, and Dr. Barrow, are the beſt and the fulleſt models. There is a vaſt variety of other ſermons, which may be read with an equal meaſure of advantage and pleaſure. And if from the time that one reſolves to direct his ſtudies towards the church, he would every Lord's day read two ſermons of any good preacher, and turn them a little over in his thoughts, this would inſenſibly in two or three years time, carry him very far, and give him a large view of the different ways of preaching, and furniſh him with materials for handling a great many texts of ſcripture when he comes to it.

And thus I have carried my ſtudent through thoſe ſtudies, that ſeem to me ſo neceſſary for qualifying him to be an able Miniſter of the New Teſtament, that I cannot ſee how any article of this can be well abated. It may ſeem ſtrange, that in this whole direction, I have ſaid nothing concerning the ſtudy of the fathers or church hiſtory. But I ſaid at firſt, that a great diſtinct-

on was to be made between what was neceſſary to prepare a man to be a Prieſt, and what was neceſſary to make him a compleat and learned divine.

The knowledge of theſe things is neceſſary to the latter, though they do not ſeem ſo neceſſary for the former: there are many things to be left to the proſecution of a divine ſtudy, that therefore are not mentioned here, not with any deſign to diſparage that ſort of learning: for I am now only upon that meaſure of knowledge, under which I heartily wiſh that no man were put in Prieſts orders; and therefore I have paſt over many other things, ſuch as the more accurate underſtanding of the controverſies between us and the church of Rome, and the unhappy diſputes between us and the diſſenters of all ſorts; though both the one and the other have of late been opened with that perſpicuity, that fulneſs of argument, and that clearneſs as well as ſoftneſs of ſtile, that a collection of theſe may give a man the fulleſt inſtruction that is to be found in any books I know. Others, and perhaps the far greater number, will think that I have clogged this matter too much. But I deſire theſe may conſider how much we do juſtly reckon, that our profeſſion is preferable either to law or medicine. Now, if this is true, it is not unreaſonable, that ſince thoſe who pretend to theſe, muſt be at ſo much pains, before they enter upon a practice which relates only to men's fortunes, or their perſons, we whoſe labours relate to their ſouls, and their eternal

ſtate, ſhould be at leaſt at ſome conſiderable pains, before we enter upon them. Let any young divine go to the chambers of a ſtudent in the inns of court, and ſee how many books he muſt read, and how great a volume of a common-place-book he muſt make, he will there ſee through how hard a taſk one muſt go, in a courſe of many years, and how ready he muſt be in all the parts of it, before he is called to the bar, or can manage buſineſs. How exact muſt a phyſician be in anatomy, in ſimples, in pharmacy, in the theory of diſeaſes, and in the obſervations and councils of doctors, before he can either with honour, or a ſafe conſcience, undertake practice? He muſt be ready with all this, and in that infinite number of hard words, that belong to every part of it, to give his directions and write his bills by the patient's bed-ſide; who cannot ſtay till he goes to his ſtudy and turns over his books. If then ſo long a courſe of ſtudy and ſo much exactneſs and readineſs in it, is neceſſary to theſe profeſſions; nay, if every mechanical art, even the meaneſt, requires a courſe of many years, before one can be a maſter in it, ſhall the nobleſt and the moſt important of all others, that which comes from heaven, and leads thither again; ſhall that which God has honoured ſo highly, and to which laws and governments have added ſuch privileges and encouragements, that is employ'd in the ſublimeſt exerciſes, which require a proportioned worth in thoſe who handle them, to maintain their value and dignity in the eſteem of the

world; ſhall all this, I ſay, be eſteemed ſo low a thing in our eyes, that a much leſs degree of time and ſtudy, is neceſſary to arrive at it, than at the moſt ſordid of all trades whatſoever? And yet after all, a man of a tolerable capacity, with a good degree of application, may go through all this well, and exactly, in two years time. I am very ſure, by many an experiment I have made, that this may be done in a much leſs compaſs: but becauſe all men do not go alike quick, have not the ſame force, nor the ſame application, therefore I reckon two years for it; which I do thus divide: one year before Deacons orders, and another between them and Prieſts orders. And can this be thought a hard impoſition? Or do not thoſe, who think thus, give great occaſion to the contempt of the clergy, if they give the world cauſe to obſerve, that how much ſoever we may magnify our profeſſion, yet by our practiſe, we ſhew that we do judge it the meaneſt of all others, which is to be arrived at upon leſs previous ſtudy and preparation to it, than any other whatſoever? Since I have been hitherto ſo minute, I will yet divide this matter a little lower into thoſe parts of it, without which Deacons orders ought not be given, and to thoſe to be reſerved to the ſecond year of ſtudy. To have read the New Teſtament well, ſo as to carry a great deal of it in one's memory, to have a clear notion of the ſeveral books of it, to underſtand well the nature and the conditions of the covenant of grace, and to have read one ſyſtem well, ſo as to be

maſter of it, to underſtand the whole catechetical matter, to have read Wilkins and Grotius; this, I ſay, is that part of his taſk which I propoſe before one is made Deacon. The reſt, though much the larger, will go the eaſier, if thoſe foundations are once well laid in them. And upon the article of ſtudying the ſcriptures, I will add one advice more.

There are two methods in reading them, the one ought to be merely critical, to find out the meaning and coherence of the ſeveral parts of them, in which one runs eaſily through the greater part, and is only obliged to ſtop at ſome harder paſſages, which may be marked down, and learned men are to be conſulted upon them: thoſe that are really hard to be explained, are both few, and they relate to matters that are not ſo eſſential to chriſtianity; and therefore after one has in general ſeen what is ſaid upon theſe, he may put off the fuller conſideration of that to more leiſure, and better opportunities. But the other way of reading the ſcriptures, is to be done merely with a view to practice, to raiſe devotion, to increaſe piety, and to give good thoughts and ſevere rules. In this a man is to employ himſelf much. This is a book always at hand, and the getting a great deal of it always by heart, is the beſt part of a clergyman's ſtudy; it is the foundation, and lays in the materials for all the reſt. This alone may furniſh a man with a noble ſtock of lively thoughts, and ſublime expreſſions; and therefore it muſt be always reckoned as that, without

which all other things amount to nothing; and the chief and main ſubject of the ſtudy, the meditation and the diſcourſes of a clergyman.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the functions and labours of clergymen.

I Have in the former chapter laid down the model and method, by which a Clerk is to be formed and prepared: I come now to conſider his courſe of life, his public functions, and his ſecret labours. In this, as well as in the former, I will ſtudy to conſider what mankind can bear, rather than what may be offered in a fair idea, that is far above what we can hope ever to bring the world to. As for a Prieſt's life and converſation, ſo much was ſaid in the former chapter; in which, as a preparation to orders, it was propoſed what he ought to be, that I may now be the ſhorter on this article.

The clergy have one great advantage, beyond all the reſt of the world, in this reſpect, beſides all others, that whereas the particular callings of other men, prove to them great diſtractions, and lay many temptations in their way, to divert them from minding their high and holy calling of being chriſtians; it is quite otherwiſe with the clergy; the more they follow their private callings, they do the more certainly advance their general

one: the better Prieſts they are, they become alſo the better chriſtians: every part of their calling, when well performed, raiſes good thoughts, brings good ideas into their mind, and tends both to increaſe their knowledge, and quicken their ſenſe of divine matters. A Prieſt therefore is more accountable to God and the world for his deportment, and will be more ſeverely accounted with than any other perſon whatſoever. He is more watched over and obſerved than all others: very good men will be, even to a cenſure, jealous of him; very bad men will wait for his halting, and inſult upon it; and all ſorts of perſons, will be willing to defend themſelves againſt the authority of his doctrine and admonitions, by this, he ſays, but does not; and though our Saviour charged his diſciples and followers, "to "hear thoſe who ſat in Moſes chair and to obſerve and "do whatſoever they bid them obſerve, but not to do "after their works, for they ſaid and did not;" the world will reverſe this quite, and conſider rather how a Clerk lives, than what he ſays. They ſee the one, and from it conclude what he himſelf thinks of the other; and ſo will believe themſelves not a little juſtified, if they can ſay that they did no worſe, than as they ſaw their miniſter do before them.

Therefore a Prieſt muſt not only abſtain from groſs ſcandals, but keep at the furtheſt diſtance from them: he muſt not only not be drunk, but he muſt not ſit a tippling, nor go to taverns or ale-houſes, except ſome ur-

gent occaſions require it, and ſtay no longer in them, than as that occaſion demands it. He muſt not only abſtain from acts of lewdneſs, but from all indecent behaviour, and unbecoming raillery: gaming and plays, and every thing of that ſort, which is an approach to the vanities and diſorders of the world, muſt be avoided by him. And unleſs the ſtraitneſs of his condition, or his neceſſities force it, he ought to ſhun all other cares, ſuch as, not only the farming of grounds, but even the teaching of ſchools, ſince theſe muſt of neceſſity take him off both from his labour and ſtudy. Such diverſion as his health, or the temper of his mind, may render proper for him, ought to be manly, decent and grave; and ſuch as may neither poſſeſs his mind or time too much, nor give a bad character of him to his people: he muſt alſo avoid too much familiarity with bad people; and the ſquandring away his time in too much vain and idle diſcourſe. His chearfulneſs ought to be frank, but neither exceſſive nor licentious: his friends and his garden ought to be his chief diverſions, as his ſtudy, and his pariſh ought to be his chief employments. He muſt ſtill carry on his ſtudy, making himſelf an abſolute maſter of the few books he has, till his circumſtances grow larger, that he can purchaſe more. He can have no pretence, if he were ever ſo narrow in the world, to ſay that he cannot get, not only the collects, but the Pſalms, and the New Teſtament by heart, or at leaſt a great part of them. If there be any books belonging to his church, ſuch as Jewel's works, and the book of martyrs,

which lie tearing in many places, these he may read over and over again till he is able to furnish himself better, I mean with a greater variety; but let him furnish himself ever so well, the reading and understanding the scriptures, chiefly of the Psalms and the New Testament, ought to be still his chief study, till he becomes so conversant in them, that he can both say many parts of them, and explain them without book.

It is the only visible reason of the Jews adhering so firmly to their religion, that during the ten or twelve years of their education, their youth are so much practised to the scriptures, to weigh every word in them, and get them all by heart, that it is an admiration, to see how ready both men and women among them are at it; their Rabbi's have it to that perfection, that they have the concordance of their whole bible in their memories, which gives them vast advantages, when they are to argue with any that are not so ready as they are in the scriptures. Our task is much shorter and easier, and it is a reproach, especially to us protestants, who found our religion merely on the scriptures, that we know the New Testament so little, which cannot be excused.

With the study of the scriptures, or rather as a part of it, comes in the study of the fathers, as far as one can go; in these their apologies, and epistles, are chiefly to be read; for these give us the best views of those times; Basil's and Chrysostom's sermons are by much the best. To these studies, history comes in as a

noble and pleaſant addition; that gives a man great views of the providence of God, of the nature of man, and of the conduct of the world. This is above no man's capacity; and though ſome hiſtories are better than others, yet any hiſtories, ſuch as one can get, are to be read, rather than none at all. If one can compaſs it, he ought to begin with the hiſtory of the church, and there at the head Joſephus, and go on with Euſebius, Socrates, and the other hiſtorians, that are commonly bound together; and then go to other later collectors of ancient hiſtory; the hiſtory of our own church and country is to come next; then the ancient Greek and Roman hiſtory, and after that as much hiſtory, Geography, and books of travels as can be had, will give an eaſy and uſeful entertainment, and will furniſh one with great variety of good thoughts, and of pleaſant, as well as edifying diſcourſe. As for all other ſtudies, every one muſt follow his inclinations, his capacities, and that which he can procure to himſelf. The books that we learn at ſchools are generally laid aſide, with this prejudice, that they were the labours as well as the ſorrows of our childhood and education; but they are among the beſt of books: the Greek and Roman authors have a ſpirit in them, a force both of thought and expreſſion, that later ages have not been able to imitate: Buchanan only excepted, in whom, more particularly in his Pſalms, there is a beauty and life, an exactneſs as well as a liberty, that cannot be imitated, and ſcarce enough commended. The ſtudy

and practice of phyſick, eſpecially that which is ſafe and ſimple, puts the clergy in a capacity of doing great acts of charity, and of rendring both their perſons and labours very acceptable to their people; it will procure their being ſoon ſent for by them in ſickneſs, and it will give them great advantages in ſpeaking to them of their ſpiritual concerns, when they are ſo careful of their perſons; but in this nothing that is ſordid muſt mix.

Theſe ought to be the chief ſtudies of the clergy. But to give all theſe their full effect, a Prieſt that is much in his ſtudy, ought to employ a great part of his time in ſecret and fervent prayer, for the direction and bleſſing of God in his labours, for the conſtant aſſiſtance of his Holy Spirit, and for a lively ſenſe of divine matters, that ſo he may feel the impreſſions of them grow deep and ſtrong upon his thoughts. This, and this only, will make him go on with his work, without wearying, and be always rejoicing in it: this will make his expreſſions of theſe things to be happy and noble, when he can bring them out of the good treaſure of his heart; that is ever full, and always warm with them.

From his ſtudy, I go next to his public functions: he muſt bring his mind to an inward and feeling ſenſe of thoſe things that are prayed for in our offices: that will make him pronounce them with an equal meaſure of gravity and affection, and with a due ſlowneſs and emphaſis. I do not love the theatrical way of the church of Rome, in which it is a great ſtudy, and a long prac-

tice, to learn in every one of their offices, how they ought to compoſe their looks, geſture, and voice; yet a light wandring of the eyes, and a haſty running through the prayers, are things highly unbecoming; they do very much leſſen the majeſty of our worſhip, and give our enemies advantage to call it dead and formal, when they ſee plainly, that he who officiates is dead and formal in it. A deep ſenſe of the things prayed for, a true recollection and attention of ſpirit, and a holy earneſtneſs of ſoul, will give a compoſure to the looks, and a weight to the pronunciation, that will be tempered between affectation on the one hand, and levity on the other. As for preaching, I refer that to a chapter apart.

A miniſter ought to inſtruct his people frequently, of the nature of baptiſm, that they may not go about it merely as a ceremony, as it is too viſible the greater part do; but that they may conſider it as the dedicating their children to God, the offering them to Chriſt, and the holding them thereafter as his; directing their chief care about them, to the breeding them up in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord." There muſt be care taken to give them all a right notion of the uſe of god-fathers and god-mothers, which is a good inſtitution, to procure a double ſecurity for the education of children; it being to be ſuppoſed, that the common ties of nature and religion bind the parents ſo ſtrongly, that if they are not mindful of theſe, a ſpecial

vow would put a new force in them: and therefore a collateral ſecurity is alſo demanded, both to ſupply their defects, if they are faulty, and to take care of the religious education of the infant, in caſe the parents ſhould happen to die before that is done. And therefore no god-father or god-mother are to be invited to that office, but ſuch with whom one would truſt the care of the education of his child; nor ought any to do this office for another, but he that is willing to charge himſelf with the education of the child for whom he anſwers. But when ambition or vanity, favour or preſents, are the conſiderations upon which thoſe ſureties in baptiſm are choſen; great advantage is hereby given to thoſe who reject infant-baptiſm, and the ends of the church in this inſtitution are quite defeated; which are both the making the ſecurity that is given for the children ſo much the ſtronger, and the eſtabliſhing an endearment and a tenderneſs between families; this being, in its own nature, no ſmall tye, how little ſoever it may be apprehended or underſtood.

Great care muſt be taken in the inſtruction of the youth: the bare ſaying the Catechiſm by rote is a ſmall matter; it is neceſſary to make them underſtand the weight of every word in it: and for this end, every Prieſt, that minds his duty, will find that no part of it is ſo uſeful to his people, as once every year to go through the whole church catechiſm, word by word, and make his people underſtand the importance of e-

very tittle in it. This will be no hard labour to himſelf; for after he has once gathered together the places of ſcripture that relate to every article, and formed ſome clear illuſtrations, and eaſy ſimilies to make it underſtood; his catechetical diſcourſes, during all the reſt of his life, will be only the going over that ſame matter again and again. By this means his people will come to have all this by heart; they will know what to ſay upon it at home to their children; and they will underſtand all his ſermons the better, when they have once had a clear notion of all thoſe terms that muſt run through them: for thoſe not being underſtood, renders them all unintelligible. A diſcourſe of this ſort would be generally of much greater edification than an afternoon's ſermon: it ſhould not be too long; too much muſt not be ſaid at a time, nor more than one point opened; a quarter of an hour is time ſufficient; for it will grow tedious and be too little remembred, if it is half an hour long. This would draw an aſſembly to evening prayers, which we ſee are but too much neglected, when there is no ſort of diſcourſe or ſermon accompanying them. And the practiſing this, during the ſix months of the year, in which the days are long, would be a very effectual means both to inſtruct the people, and to bring them to a more religious obſervation of the Lord's day; which is one of the powerfulleſt inſtruments for the carrying on, and advancing of religion in the world.

With catechiſm, a miniſter is to join the preparing thoſe whom he inſtructs to be confirmed, which is not to be done merely upon their being able to ſay over ſo many words by rote. It is their renewing their baptiſmal vow in their own perſons, which the church deſigns by that office; and the bearing in their own minds, a ſenſe of their being bound immediately by that, which their ſureties then undertook for them. Now to do this in ſuch a manner, as that it may make impreſſion, and have a due effect upon them, they muſt ſtay, till they themſelves underſtand what they do, and till they have ſome ſenſe and affection to it; and therefore till one is of an age and diſpoſition fit to receive the holy ſacrament of the Lord's ſupper, and deſires to be confirmed, as a ſolemn preparation and qualification to it, he is not yet ready for it: for in the common management of that holy rite, it is but too viſible, that of thoſe multitudes that croud to it, the far greater part, come merely as if they were to receive the Biſhop's bleſſing, without any ſenſe of the vow made by them, and of their renewing their baptiſmal engagement in it.

As for the greateſt and ſolemneſt of all the inſtitutions of Chriſt, the commemorating his death, and the partaking of it in the Lord's ſupper; this muſt be well explained to the people, to preſerve them from the extremes of ſuperſtition and irreverence; to raiſe in them a great ſenſe of the goodneſs of God, that appeared in the death of Chriſt; of his love to us, of the ſacrifice

he once offered, and of the interceſſion which he ſtill continues to make for us: a ſhare in all which is there federally offered to us, upon our coming under engagements, to anſwer our part of the covenant, and to live according to the rules it ſets us. On theſe things he ought to enlarge himſelf not only in his ſermons, but in his catechetical exerciſes, and in private diſcourſes; that ſo he may give his people right notions of that ſolemn part of worſhip, that he may bring them to delight in it; and may neither fright them from it, by raiſing their apprehenſions of it to a ſtrictneſs that may terrify too much, nor encourage them in the too common practice of the dead, and formal receiving, at the great feſtivals, as a piece of decency recommended by cuſtom.

About the time of the ſacrament, every miniſter that knows any one of his pariſh guilty of eminent ſins, ought to go and admoniſh him to change his courſe of life, or not to profane the table of the Lord; and if private admonitions have no effect, then if his ſins are public and ſcandalous, he ought to deny him the ſacrament; and upon that he ought to take the method which is ſtill left in the church to make ſinners aſhamed, to ſeparate them from holy things, till they have edified the church as much by their repentance, and the outward profeſſion of it, as they had formerly ſcandalized it by their diſorders. This we muſt confeſs, that tho' we have great reaſon to lament our want of the godly diſcipline that was in the primitive church, yet we have ſtill

authority for a great deal more than we put in practice. Scandalous perſons ought, and might be more frequently preſented than they are, and both private and public admonitions might be more uſed than they are. There is a flatneſs in all theſe things among us. Some are willing to do nothing, becauſe they cannot do all that they ought to do; whereas the right way for procuring an enlargement of our authority, is to uſe that we have well; not as an engine to gratify our own or other peoples paſſions, not to vex people, nor to look after fees, more than the correction of manners or the edification of the people. If we began much with private applications, and brought none into our courts, till it was viſible that all other ways had been unſucceſsful, and that no regard was had either to perſons or parties, to mens opinions or intereſts, we might again bring our courts into the eſteem which they ought to have, but which they have almoſt entirely loſt. We can never hope to bring the world to bear the yoke of Chriſt, and the order that he has appointed to be kept up in his church, 'of noting thoſe that walk diſorderly, of 'ſeparating ourſelves from them, of having no fellow-'ſhip, no, not ſo much as to eat with them;' as long as we give them cauſe to apprehend, that we intend by this to bring them under our yoke, to ſubdue them to us, and "to rule them with a rod of iron:" for the truth is, mankind is ſo ſtrangely compounded, that it is very hard to reſtrain eccleſiaſtical tyranny on the one

hand, without running to a lawleſs licentiouſneſs on the other; ſo ſtrangely does the world love extremes, and avoid a temper.

Now I have gone through the public functions of a Prieſt, and in ſpeaking of the laſt of theſe, I have broke in upon the third head of his duty, his private labours in his pariſh. He underſtands little of the nature and the obligations of the prieſtly office, who thinks he has diſcharged it, by performing the public appointments; in which if he is defective, the laws of the church, how feeble ſoever they may be as to other things, will have their courſe. But as the private duties of the Paſtoral Care, are things upon which the cognizance of the law cannot fall, ſo they are the moſt important and neceſſary of all others; and the more praiſe-worthy, the freer they are, and the leſs forced by the compulſion of law. As to the public functions, every man has his rule; and in theſe all are almoſt alike; every man, eſpecially if his lungs are good, can read prayers, even in the largeſt congregation; and if he has a right taſte, and can but chuſe good ſermons, out of the many that are in print, he may likewiſe ſerve them well that way too. But the difference between one man and another, ſhews itſelf more ſenſibly in his private labours, in his prudent deportment, in his modeſt and diſcreet way of procuring reſpect to himſelf, in his treating his pariſh, either in reconciling ſuch differences as may happen to be among them, or in admoniſhing men of rank, who ſet

an ill example to others, which ought always to be done in that way which will probably have the beſt effect upon them; therefore it muſt be done ſecretly, and with expreſſions of tenderneſs and reſpect for their perſons: fit times are to be choſen for this; it may be often the beſt way to do it by a letter: for there may be ways fallen upon, of reproving the worſt men, in ſo ſoft a manner, that if they are not reclaimed, yet they ſhall not be irritated or made worſe by it, which is but too often the effect of an indiſcreet reproof. By this a miniſter may ſave the ſinner's ſoul; he is at leaſt ſure to ſave his own, by having diſcharged his duty towards his people.

One of the chief parts of the Paſtoral Care is, the viſiting the ſick; not to be done barely when one is ſent for: he is to go as ſoon as he hears that any of his flock are ill: he is not to ſatisfy himſelf with going over the office, or giving them the ſacrament when deſired: he ought to inform himſelf of their courſe of life, and of the temper of their mind, that ſo he may apply himſelf to them accordingly. If they are inſenſible, he ought to awaken them with the terrors of God, the judgment and the wrath to come. He muſt endeavour to make them ſenſible of their ſins; particularly of that which runs through moſt mens lives, their forgetting and neglecting God and his ſervice, and their ſetting their hearts ſo inordinately upon the world: he muſt ſet them on to examine their dealings, and make them ſeriouſly

to conſider, that they can expect no mercy from God, unleſs they reſtore whatſoever they may have got unjuſtly from any other, by any manner of way, even though their title were confirmed by law: he is to lay any other ſins to their charge, that he has reaſon to ſuſpect them guilty of; and muſt preſs them to all ſuch acts of repentance as they are then capable of. If they have been men of a bad courſe of life, he muſt give them no encouragement to hope much from this death-bed repentance; yet he is to ſet them to implore the mercies of God in Chriſt Jeſus, and to do all they can to obtain his favour. But unleſs the ſickneſs has been of a long continuance, and that the perſon's repentance, his patience, his piety has been very extraordinary, during the courſe of it, he muſt be ſure to give him no poſitive ground of hope; but leave him to the mercies of God. For there cannot be any greater treachery to ſouls, that is more fatal and more pernicious, than the giving quick and eaſy hopes, upon ſo ſhort, ſo forced, and ſo imperfect a repentance. It not only makes thoſe perſons periſh ſecurely themſelves, but it leads all about them to deſtruction, when they ſee one, of whoſe bad life and late repentance they have been the witneſſes, put ſo ſoon in hopes, nay, by ſome unfaithful guides, made ſure of ſalvation: this muſt make them go on very ſecure in their ſins, when they ſee how ſmall a meaſure of repentance ſets all right at laſt. All the order and juſtice of a nation would be preſently diſſolved,

ſhould the howlings of criminals, and their promiſes of amendment work on juries, judges, or princes: ſo the hopes that are given to death-bed penitents, muſt be a moſt effectual means to root out the ſenſe of religion of the minds of all that ſee it. And therefore though no dying man is to be driven to deſpair, and left to die obſtinate in his ſins; yet if we love the ſouls of our people, if we ſet a due value on the blood of Chriſt, and if we are touched with any ſenſe of the honour or intereſts of religion, we muſt not ſay any thing that may encourage others, who are but too apt of themſelves to put all off to the laſt hour. We can give them no hopes from the nature of the goſpel-covenant; yet after all, the beſt thing a dying man can do, is to repent; if he recovers, that may be the ſeed and beginning of a new life and a new nature in him. Nor do we know the meaſure of the riches of God's grace and mercy; how far he may think fit to exert it beyond the conditions and promiſes of the new covenant, at leaſt to the leſſening of ſuch a perſon's miſery in another ſtate. We are ſure he is not within the new covenant; and ſince he has not repented, according to the tenor of it, we dare not, unleſs we betray our commiſſion, give any hopes beyond it. But one of the chief cares of a miniſter about the ſick, ought to be to exact of them ſolemn vows and promiſes, of a renovation of life, in caſe God ſhall raiſe them up again; and theſe ought to be demanded, not only

in general words, but if they have been guilty of any ſcandalous diſorders, or any other ill practices, there ought to be ſpecial promiſes made with relation to thoſe. And upon the recovery of ſuch perſons, their miniſters ought to put them in mind of their engagements, and uſe all the due freedom of admonitions and reproof, upon their breaking looſe from them. In ſuch a caſe they ought to leave a terrible denunciation of the judgments of God upon them, and ſo at leaſt, they acquit themſelves.

There is another ſort of ſick perſons, who abound more in towns than in the country; thoſe are the troubled in mind: of theſe there are two ſorts, ſome have committed enormous ſins, which kindle a ſtorm in their conſciences; and that ought to be cheriſhed, till they have compleated a repentance proportioned to the nature and degree of their ſin. If wrong has been done to another, reparation and reſtitution muſt be made to the utmoſt of the party's power. If blood has been ſhed, a long courſe of faſting and prayer; a total abſtinence from wine, if drunkenneſs gave the riſe to it; a making up the loſs to the family, on which it has fallen, muſt be enjoined. But alas! the greater part of thoſe that think they are troubled in mind, are melancholy hypochondriacal people, who, what through ſome falſe opinions in religion, what through a foulneſs of blood, occaſioned by their unactive courſe of life, in which their minds work too much, becauſe their bodies

are too little employed, fall under dark and cloudy apprehenſions; of which they can give no clear nor good account. This, in the greateſt part, is to be removed by ſtrong and chalybeate medicines; yet ſuch perſons are to be much pitied, and a little humoured in their diſtemper. They muſt be diverted from thinking too much, being too much alone, or dwelling too long on thoughts that are too hard for them to maſter.

The opinion that has had the chief influence in raiſing theſe diſtempers, has been that of praying by the Spirit; when a flame of thought, a melting in the brain, and the abounding in tender expreſſions, have been thought the effect of the Spirit, moving all thoſe ſymptoms of a warm temper. Now in all people, eſpecially in perſons of a melancholy diſpoſition, that are much alone, there will be a great diverſity, with relation to this, at different times: ſometimes theſe heats will riſe and flow copiouſly, and at other times there will be a damp upon the brain, and a dead dryneſs in the ſpirits. This to men that are prepoſſeſſed with the opinion, now ſet forth, will appear as if God did ſometimes ſhine out, and at other times hide his face; and ſince this laſt will be the moſt frequent in men of that temper, as they will be apt to be lifted up, when they think they have a fulneſs of the Spirit in them, ſo they will be as much caſt down when that is withdrawn; they will conclude from it, that God is angry with them, and ſo reckon that they muſt be in a very dangerous condi-

tion: upon this a vaſt variety of troubleſome ſcruples will ariſe, out of every thing that they either do or have done. If then a miniſter has occaſion to treat any in this condition, he muſt make them apprehend that the heat or coldneſs of their brain, is the effect of temper, and flows from the different ſtate of the animal ſpirits, which have their diſeaſes, their hot and their cold fits, as well as the blood has; and therefore no meaſure can be taken from theſe, either to judge for or againſt themſelves. They are to conſider what are their principles and reſolutions, and what's the ſettled courſe of their life; upon theſe they are to form ſure judgments, and not upon any thing that is ſo fluctuating and inconſtant as fits or humours.

Another part of a Prieſts's duty is, with relation to them that are without, I mean, that are not of our body, which are of the ſide of the church of Rome, or among the Diſſenters. Other churches and bodies are noted for their zeal in making proſelytes, for their reſtleſs endeavours, as well as their unlawful methods in it; they reckoning, perhaps, that all will be ſanctified by the encreaſing their party; which is the true name of making converts, except they become at the ſame time good men, as well as votaries to a ſide or cauſe. We are certainly very remiſs in this of both hands, little pains is taken to gain either upon Papiſt or Nonconformiſt; the law has been ſo much truſted to, that that method only was thought ſure; it was much

valued, and others at the ſame time as much neglected; and whereas at firſt, without force or violence, in forty years time, Popery from being the prevailing religion, was reduced to a handful, we have now in above twice that number of years made very little progreſs. The favour ſhew'd them from our court, made us ſeem, as it were, unwilling to diſturb them in their religion; ſo that we grew at laſt to be kind to them, to look on them as harmleſs and inoffenſive neighbours, and even to cheriſh and comfort them: we were very near the being convinced of our miſtake, by a terrible and dear bought experience. Now they are again under hatches; certainly it becomes us both in charity to them, and in regard to our own ſafety, to ſtudy to gain them by the force of reaſon and perſuaſion; by ſhewing all kindneſs to them, and thereby diſpoſing them to hearken to the reaſons that we may lay before them. We ought not to give over this as deſperate, upon a few unſucceſsful attempts; but muſt follow them in the meekneſs of Chriſt, that ſo we may at laſt prove happy inſtruments, in delivering them from the blindneſs and captivity they are kept under, and the idolatry and ſuperſtition they live in: we ought to viſit them often in a ſpirit of love and charity, and to offer them conferences; and upon ſuch endeavours, we have reaſon to expect a bleſſing, at leaſt this, of having done our duty, and ſo delivering our own ſouls.

Nor are we to think, that the toleration, under

which the law has ſettled the Diſſenters, does either abſolve them from the obligations that they lay under before, by the laws of God and the goſpel, to maintain the unity of the church, and not to rent it by unjuſt or cauſeleſs ſchiſms; or us from uſing our endeavours to bring them to it, by the methods of perſuaſion and kindneſs: nay, perhaps, their being now in circumſtances, that they can no more be forced in theſe things, may put ſome of them in a greater towardneſs to hear reaſon; a free nation naturally hating conſtraint: and certainly the leſs we ſeem to grudge or envy them their liberty, we will be thereby the nearer gaining on the generouſer and better part of them, and the reſt would ſoon loſe heart, and look out of countenance, if theſe ſhould hearken to us. It was the opinion many had of their ſtrictneſs, and of the looſeneſs that was among us, that gained them their credit, and made ſuch numbers fall off from us. They have in a great meaſure loſt the good character that once they had; if to that we ſhould likewiſe loſe our bad one; if we were ſtricter in our lives, more ſerious and conſtant in our labours; and ſtudied more effectually to reform thoſe of our communion, than to rail at theirs; if we took occaſion to let them ſee that we love them, that we wiſh them no harm but good; then we might hope, by the bleſſing of God, to lay the obligations to love and peace, to unity and concord before them, with ſuch advantages, that ſome of them might open their eyes, and ſee at laſt upon

how ſlight grounds they have now ſo long kept up ſuch a wrangling, and made ſuch a rent in the church, that both the power of religion in general, and the ſtrength of the Proteſtant religion, have ſuffered extremely by them.

Thus far I have carried a Clerk through his pariſh, and all the ſeveral branches of his duty to his people. But that all this may be well gone about, and indeed as the foundation upon which all the other parts of the paſtoral care may be well managed, he ought frequently to viſit his whole pariſh from houſe to houſe; that ſo he may know them, and be known of them. This I know will ſeem a vaſt labour, eſpecially in towns where pariſhes are large; but that is no excuſe for thoſe in the country, where they are generally ſmall; and if they are larger, the going this round will be the longer a doing; yet, an hour a day, twice or thrice a week, is no hard duty; and this in the compaſs of a year will go a great way, even in a large pariſh. In theſe viſits, much time is not to be ſpent; a ſhort word for ſtirring them up to mind their ſouls, to make conſcience of their ways, and to pray earneſtly to God, may begin it, and almoſt end it. After one has aſked in what union and peace the neighbourhood lives, and enquired into their neceſſities, if they ſeem very poor, that ſo thoſe to whom that care belongs may be put in mind, to ſee how they may be relieved; in this courſe of viſiting, a miniſter will ſoon find out, if there are any truly good perſon in his pariſh,

after whom he muſt look with a more particular regard. Since theſe are the excellent ones, in whom all his delight ought to be. For let their rank be ever ſo mean, if they are ſincerely religious, and not hypocritical pretenders to it, who are vainly puffed up with ſome degrees of knowledge, and other outward appearances, he ought to conſider them as the moſt valuable in the ſight of God; and indeed, as the chief part of his care; for 'a living dog is better than a dead lion.' I know this way of parochial viſitation, is ſo worn out, that, perhaps, neither Prieſt nor people, will be very deſirous to ſee it taken up. It will put the one to labour and trouble, and bring the other under a cloſer inſpection, which bad men will no ways deſire, nor perhaps endure. But if this were put on the clergy by their Biſhops, and if they explained in a ſermon before they began it, the reaſon and ends of doing it; that would remove the prejudices which might ariſe againſt it. I confeſs this is an increaſe of labour, but that will ſeem no hard matter to ſuch as have a right ſenſe of their ordination vows, of the value of ſouls, and of the dignity of their function. If men had the ſpirit of their calling in them, and a due meaſure of flame and heat in carrying it on; labour in it would be rather a pleaſure than a trouble. In all other profeſſions, thoſe who follow them, labour in them all the year long, and are hard at their buſineſs every day in the week. All men that are well ſuited in a profeſſion, that is agreeable to their genius and inclination, are

really the eaſier and the better pleaſed, the more they are employed in it. Indeed there is no trade nor courſe of life, except ours, that does not take up the whole man. And ſhall ours only, that is the nobleſt of all others, and that has a certain ſubſiſtence fixed upon it, and that does not live by contingencies, and upon hopes, as all others do, make the labouring in our buſineſs, an objection againſt any part of our duty? Certainly nothing can ſo much diſpoſe the nation to think on the relieving the neceſſities of the many ſmall livings, as the ſeeing the clergy ſetting about their buſineſs to purpoſe; this would, by the bleſſing of God, be a moſt effectual means, of ſtopping the progreſs of atheiſm, and of the contempt that the clergy lies under; it would go a great way towards the healing our ſchiſm, and would be the chief ſtep that could poſſibly be made, towards the procuring to us ſuch laws as are yet wanting to the compleating our reformation, and the mending the condition of ſo many of our poor bretheren, who are languiſhing in want, and under great ſtraits.

There remains only ſomewhat to be added concerning the behaviour of the clergy towards one another. Thoſe of a higher form in learning, dignity and wealth, ought not to deſpiſe poor vicars and curates; but on the contrary, the poorer they are, they ought to pity and encourage them the more, ſince they are all of the ſame order, only the one are more happily placed than the others: they ought therefore to cheriſh thoſe that are in

after whom he muſt look with a more particular regard. Since theſe are the excellent ones, in whom all his delight ought to be. For let their rank be ever ſo mean, if they are ſincerely religious, and not hypocritical pretenders to it, who are vainly puffed up with ſome degrees of knowledge, and other outward appearances, he ought to conſider them as the moſt valuable in the ſight of God; and indeed, as the chief part of his care; for 'a living dog is better than a dead lion.' I know this way of parochial viſitation, is ſo worn out, that, perhaps, neither Prieſt nor people, will be very deſirous to ſee it taken up. It will put the one to labour and trouble, and bring the other under a cloſer inſpection, which bad men will no ways deſire, nor perhaps endure. But if this were put on the clergy by their Biſhops, and if they explained in a ſermon before they began it, the reaſon and ends of doing it; that would remove the prejudices which might ariſe againſt it. I confeſs this is an increaſe of labour, but that will ſeem no hard matter to ſuch as have a right ſenſe of their ordination vows, of the value of ſouls, and of the dignity of their function. If men had the ſpirit of their calling in them, and a due meaſure of flame and heat in carrying it on; labour in it would be rather a pleaſure than a trouble. In all other profeſſions, thoſe who follow them, labour in them all the year long, and are hard at their buſineſs every day in the week. All men that are well ſuited in a profeſſion, that is agreeable to their genius and inclination, are

really the eaſier and the better pleaſed, the more they are employed in it. Indeed there is no trade nor courſe of life, except ours, that does not take up the whole man. And ſhall ours only, that is the nobleſt of all others, and that has a certain ſubſiſtence fixed upon it, and that does not live by contingencies, and upon hopes, as all others do, make the labouring in our buſineſs, an objection againſt any part of our duty? Certainly nothing can ſo much diſpoſe the nation to think on the relieving the neceſſities of the many ſmall livings, as the ſeeing the clergy ſetting about their buſineſs to purpoſe; this would, by the bleſſing of God, be a moſt effectual means, of ſtopping the progreſs of atheiſm, and of the contempt that the clergy lies under; it would go a great way towards the healing our ſchiſm, and would be the chief ſtep that could poſſibly be made, towards the procuring to us ſuch laws as are yet wanting to the compleating our reformation, and the mending the condition of ſo many of our poor bretheren, who are languiſhing in want, and under great ſtraits.

There remains only ſomewhat to be added concerning the behaviour of the clergy towards one another. Thoſe of a higher form in learning, dignity and wealth, ought not to deſpiſe poor vicars and curates; but on the contrary, the poorer they are, they ought to pity and encourage them the more, ſince they are all of the ſame order, only the one are more happily placed than the others: they ought therefore to cheriſh thoſe that are in

worſe circumſtances, and encourage them to come often to them; they ought to lend them books, and to give them other aſſiſtances in order to their progreſs in learning. 'Tis a bad thing to ſee a Biſhop behave himſelf ſuperciliouſly towards any of his clergy, but it is intolerable in thoſe of the ſame degree. The clergy ought to contrive ways to meet often together, to enter into a brotherly correſpondence, and into the concerns one of another, both in order to their progreſs in knowledge, and for conſulting together in all their affairs. This would be a means to cement them into one body; hereby they might underſtand what were amiſs in the conduct of any in their diviſion, and try to correct it either by private advices and endeavours, or by laying it before the Biſhop, by whoſe private labours, if his clergy would be aſſiſting to him, and give him free and full informations of things, many diſorders might be cured, without riſing to publick ſcandal, or forcing him to extreme cenſures. It is a falſe pity in any of the clergy, who ſee their bretheren running into ill courſes, to look on and ſay nothing: it is a cruelty to the church, and may prove a cruelty to the perſon of whom they are ſo unſeaſonably tender: for things may be more eaſily corrected at firſt, before they have grown to be public, or are hardened by habit and cuſtom. Upon theſe accounts it is of great advantage, and may be matter of great edification to the clergy, to enter into a ſtrict union together, to meet often, and to be helpful to

one another: but if this ſhould be made practicable, they muſt be extremely ſtrict in thoſe meetings, to obſerve ſo exact a ſobriety, that there might be no colour given to cenſure them, as if theſe were merry meetings, in which they allowed themſelves great liberties: it were good, if they could be brought to meet to faſt and pray; but if that is a ſtrain too high for the preſent age, at leaſt they muſt keep ſo far within bounds, that there may be no room for calumny. For a diſorder upon any ſuch occaſion, would give a wound of an extraordinary nature to the reputation of the whole clergy, when every one would bear a ſhare of the blame, which perhaps belonged but to a few. Four or five ſuch meetings in a ſummer, would neither be a great charge, nor give much trouble: but the advantages that might ariſe out of them, would be very ſenſible.

I have but one other advice to add, but it is of a thing of great conſequence, though generally managed in ſo looſe and ſo indifferent a manner, that I have ſome reaſon in charity to believe, that the clergy make very little reflection on what they do in it: and that is, in the teſtimonials that they ſign in favour of thoſe that come to be ordained. Many have confeſſed to my ſelf, that they had ſigned theſe upon general reports, and importunity; tho' the teſtimonial bears perſonal knowledge. Theſe are inſtead of the ſuffrages of the clergy, which in the primitive church were given before any were ordained. A Biſhop muſt depend upon them; for he has

no other way to be certainly informed: and therefore as it is a lie, paſs'd with the ſolemnity of hand and ſeal, to affirm any thing that is beyond one's own knowledge, ſo it is a lie made to God and the church; ſince the deſign of it is to procure orders. So that if a Biſhop, truſting to that, and being ſatisfied of the knowledge of one that brings it, ordains an unfit and unworthy man, they that ſigned it, are deeply and chiefly involved in the guilt of his laying hands ſuddenly upon him: therefore every Prieſt ought to charge his conſcience in a deep particular manner, that ſo he may never teſtify for any one, unleſs he knows his life to be ſo regular, and believes his temper to be ſo good, that he does really judge him a perſon fit to be put in holy orders. Theſe are all the rules that do occur to me at preſent.

In performing theſe ſeveral branches of the duty of a paſtor, the trouble will not be great, if he is truly a good man, and delights in the ſervice of God, and in doing acts of charity: the pleaſure will be unſpeakable; firſt, that of the conſcience in this teſtimony that it gives, and the quiet and joy which ariſes from the ſenſe of one's having done his duty: and then it can ſcarce be ſuppoſed but by all this, ſome will be wrought on; ſome ſinners will be reclaimed; bad men will grow good, and good men will grow better. And if a generous man feels, to a great degree, the pleaſure of having delivered one from miſery, and of making him eaſy and happy; how ſovereign a joy muſt it be to a man that believes there is

another life, to ſee that he has been an inſtrument to reſcue ſome from endleſs miſery, and to further others in the way to everlaſting happineſs? And the more inſtances he ſees of this, the more do his joys grow upon him. This makes life happy, and death joyful to ſuch a Prieſt; for he is not terrified with thoſe words, "give "an account of thy ſtewardſhip, for thou mayeſt be "no longer ſteward:" he knows his reward ſhall be full, preſſed down, and running over. He is but too happy in thoſe ſpiritual children, whom he has begot in Chriſt; he looks after thoſe as the chief part of his care, and as the principal of his flock, and is ſo far from aſpiring, that it is not without ſome uneaſineſs that he leaves them, if he is commanded to ariſe to ſome higher poſt in the church.

The troubles of this life, the cenſures of bad men, and even the proſpect of a perſecution, are no dreadful thing to him that has this ſeal of his miniſtry; and this comfort within him, that he has not "laboured in vain, "nor run and fought as one that beats the air; he ſees "the travel of his ſoul, and is ſatisfied, when he finds "that God's work proſpers in his hand." This comforts him in his ſad reflections on his own paſt ſins, that he has been an inſtrument of advancing God's honour, of ſaving ſouls, and of propagating his goſpel: ſince to have ſaved one ſoul, is worth a man's coming into the world, and richly worth the labours of his whole life. Here is a ſubject that might be eaſily proſecuted by ma-

ny warm and lively figures: but I now go on to the laſt article relating to this matter.

CHAP. IX.

Concerning preaching.

THE world naturally runs to extremes in every thing. If one ſect or body of men magnify preaching too much, another carries that to another extreme of decrying it as much. It is certainly a noble and a profitable exerciſe, if rightly gone about, of great uſe both to Prieſt and people, by obliging the one to much ſtudy and labour, and by ſetting before the other full and copious diſcoveries of divine matters, opening them clearly, and preſſing them weightily upon them. It has alſo now gained ſo much eſteem in the world, that a clergyman cannot maintain his credit, nor bring his people to a conſtant attendance on the worſhip of God, unleſs he is happy in theſe performances.

I will not run out into the hiſtory of preaching, to ſhew how late it was before it was brought into the church, and by what ſteps it grew up to the pitch it is now at: how long it was before the Roman church uſed it, and in how many different ſhapes it has appeared. Some of the firſt patterns we have, are the beſt: for, as Tully began the Roman eloquence, and

likewiſe ended it, no man being able to hold up to the pitch to which he raiſed it; ſo St. Baſil and St. Chryſoſtom brought preaching from the dry purſuing of allegories that had vitiated Origen, and from the exceſſive affectation of figures and rhetoric that appears in Nazianzen, to a due ſimplicity, a native force and beauty; having joined to the plainneſs of a clear but noble ſtile, the ſtrength of reaſon, and the ſoftneſs of perſuaſion. Some were diſguſted at this plainneſs, and they brought in a great deal of art into the compoſition of ſermons: myſtical applications of ſcripture grew to be better liked than clear texts; an accumulation of figures, a cadence in the periods, a playing upon the ſounds of words, a loftineſs of epithets, and often an obſcurity of expreſſion, were according to the different taſtes of the ſeveral ages run into. Preaching has paſt through many different forms among us, ſince the reformation. But without flattering the preſent age, or any perſons now alive, too much, it muſt be confeſſed, that it is brought of late to a much greater perfection than it was ever before at among us. It is certainly brought nearer the pattern that St. Chryſoſtom has ſet, or perhaps carried beyond it. Our language is much refined, and we have returned to the plain notions of ſimple and genuine rhetoric.

We have ſo vaſt a number of excellent performances in print, that if a man has but a right underſtanding of religion, and a true reliſh of good ſenſe, he may eaſily furniſh himſelf this way. The impertinent way of

dividing texts is laid aſide, the needleſs ſetting out of the originals, and the vulgar verſion, is worn out. The trifling ſhews of learning in many quotations of paſſages, that very few could underſtand, do no more flat the auditory. Pert wit and luſcious eloquence have loſt their reliſh. So that ſermons are reduced to the plain opening the meaning of the text, in a few ſhort illuſtrations of its coherence with what goes before and after, and of the parts of which it is compoſed; to that is joined the clear ſtating of ſuch propoſitions as ariſe out of it, in their nature, truth and reaſonableneſs; by which, the hearers may form clear notions of the ſeveral parts of religion, ſuch as are beſt ſuited to their capacities and apprehenſions; to all which, applications are added, tending to the reproving, directing, encouraging, or comforting the hearers, according to the ſeveral occaſions that are offered.

This is indeed all that can truly be intended in preaching, to make ſome portions of ſcripture to be rightly underſtood; to make thoſe truths contained in them to be more fully apprehended; and then to lay the matter home to the conſciences of the hearers, ſo directing all to ſome good and practical end. In the choice of the text, care is to be taken not to chuſe texts that ſeem to have humour in them; or that muſt be long wrought upon, before they are underſtood. The plainer a text is in itſelf, the ſooner it is cleared, and the fuller it is of matter of inſtruction; and therefore ſuch

ought to be choſen to common auditories. Many will remember the text, that remember nothing elſe; therefore ſuch a choice ſhould be made, as may at leaſt put a weighty and ſpeaking ſentence of the ſcriptures upon the memory of the people. A ſermon ſhould be made for a text, and not a text found out for a ſermon; for to give our diſcourſes weight, it ſhould appear that we are led to them by our texts: ſuch ſermons will probably have much more efficacy than a general diſcourſe, before which a text ſeems only to be read as a decent introduction, but to which no regard is had in the progreſs of it. Great care ſhould be alſo had, both in opening the text, and of that which ariſes from it, to illuſtrate them by concurrent paſſages of ſcripture: a little of this ought to be in every ſermon, and but a little; for the people are not to be over-charged with too much of it at a time; and this ought to be done with judgment, and not be made a bare concordance exerciſe, of citing ſcriptures, that have the ſame words, though not to the ſame purpoſe and in the ſame ſenſe. A text being opened, then the point upon which the ſermon is to run is to be opened; and it will be the better heard and underſtood, if there is but one point in a ſermon; ſo that one head, and only one is well ſtated, and fully ſet out. In this, great regard is to be had to the nature of the auditory, that ſo the point explained may be in ſome meaſure proportioned to them. Too cloſe a thread of reaſon, too great an abſtraction of thought, too ſublime and

too metaphyſical a ſtrain, are ſuitable to very few auditories, if to any at all.

Things muſt be put in a clear light, and brought out in as ſhort periods, and in as plain words as may be. The reaſons of them muſt be made as ſenſible to the people as is poſſible: as in virtues and vices, their tendencies and effects, their being ſuitable or unſuitable to our powers, to both ſouls and bodies, to the intereſts of this life as well as the next; and the good or evil that they do to human ſocieties, families and neighbourhoods, ought to be fully and frequently opened. In ſetting theſe forth, ſuch a meaſure is to be kept, that the hearers may perceive that things are not ſtrained in the way of a declamation, into forced characters; but that they are ſet out as truly they are, without making them ſeem better by imaginary perfections, or worſe by an undue aggravation. For the carrying thoſe matters beyond the plain obſervation of mankind, makes that the whole is looked on as a piece of rhetoric; the preacher ſeeming to intend rather to ſhew his ſkill, in raiſing his ſubject too high, or running it down too low, than to lay before them the native conſequences of things; and that which upon reflection they may be all able to perceive is really true. Virtue is ſo good in itſelf, that it needs no falſe paint to make it look better; and vice is ſo bad, that it can never look ſo ugly, as when ſhewed in its own natural colours. So that an undue ſublime in ſuch deſcriptions does hurt, and can do no good.

When the explanatory part of the ſermon is over, the application comes next: and here great judgment muſt be uſed, to make it fall the heavieſt, and lie the longeſt, upon ſuch particulars as may be within the compaſs of the auditory. Directions concerning a high devotion, to a ſtupid ignorant company; or of generoſity and bounty, to very poor people; againſt pride and ambition, to ſuch as are dull and low-minded, are ill-ſuited, and ſo muſt have little effect upon them: therefore care muſt be taken that the application be uſeful and proper; that it make the hearers apprehend ſome of their ſins and defects, and ſee how to perform their duty; that it awaken them to it, and direct them in it: and therefore the moſt common ſins, ſuch as mens neglecting their duty to God, in the ſeveral branches of it; their ſetting their hearts inordinately upon the world; their lying in diſcourſe, but chiefly in bargainings; their evil-ſpeaking, and their hatred and malice, ought to be very often brought in. Some one or other of theſe, ought to be in every application that is made, by which they may ſee, that the whole deſign of religion lies againſt them. Such particular ſins, ſwearing, drunkenneſs, or lewdneſs, as abound in any place, muſt likewiſe be frequently brought in here. The application muſt be clear and ſhort, very weighty, and free of every thing that looks like the affectation of wit and eloquence; here the preacher muſt be all heart and ſoul, deſigning the good of his people. The whole ſermon is directed to

this: therefore as it is fit that the chief point which a ſermon drives at, ſhould come often over and over, that ſo the hearers may never loſe ſight of it, but keep it ſtill in view; ſo in the application, the text muſt be ſhewed to ſpeak it; all the parts of the explanation muſt come in to enforce it: the application muſt be opened in the ſeveral views that it may have, but thoſe muſt be chiefly inſiſted on that are moſt ſuitable both to the capacities and the circumſtances of the people. And in concluſion, all ought to be ſummed up in a weighty period or two; and ſome other ſignal paſſage of the ſcriptures relating to it may be ſought for, that ſo the matter may be left upon the auditory in the ſolemneſt manner poſſible.

Thus I have led a preacher through the compoſition of his ſermon; I will next lay before him ſome particulars relating to it. The ſhorter ſermons are, they are generally both better heard, and better remembred. The cuſtom of an hour's length, forces many preachers to trifle away much of the time, and to ſpin out their matter, ſo as to hold out. So great a length does alſo flat the hearers, and tempt them to ſleep; eſpecially when, as is uſual, the firſt part of the ſermon is languid and heavy. In half an hour a man may lay open his matter in its full extent, and cut off thoſe ſuperfluities which come in only to lengthen the diſcourſe: and he may hope to keep up the attention of his people all the while. As to the ſtile, ſermons ought to be very plain;

the figures muſt be eaſy, not mean, but noble, and brought in upon deſign to make the matter better underſtood. The words in a ſermon muſt be ſimple, and in common uſe; not ſavouring of the ſchools, nor above the underſtanding of the people. All long periods, ſuch as carry two or three different thoughts in them, muſt be avoided; for few hearers can follow or apprehend theſe: niceties of ſtile are loſt before a common auditory. But if an eaſy ſimplicity of ſtile ſhould run through the whole compoſition, it ſhould take place moſt of all in the explanatory part; for the thing being there offered to be underſtood, it ſhould be ſtript of all garniſhing: definitions ſhould not be offered in the terms, or method, that logic directs. In ſhort, a preacher is to fancy himſelf, as in the room of the moſt unlearned man in his whole pariſh; and therefore he muſt put ſuch parts of his diſcourſe as he would have all underſtand, in ſo plain a form of words, that it may not be beyond the meaneſt of them. This he will certainly ſtudy to do, if his deſire is to edify them, rather than to make them admire himſelf as a learned and high-ſpoken man.

But in the applicatory part, if he has a true taſte of eloquence, and is a maſter at it, he is to employ it all in giving ſometimes ſuch tender touches, as may ſoften, and deeper gaſhes, ſuch as may awaken his hearers. A vain eloquence here is very ill placed; for if that can be born any where, it is in illuſtrating the matter;

but all muſt be grave, where one would perſuade: the moſt natural, but the moſt ſenſible expreſſions come in beſt here. Such an eloquence as makes the hearers look grave, and as it were out of countenance, is the propereſt. That which makes them look lively, and as it were, ſmile upon one another, may be pretty; but it only tickles the imagination, and pleaſes the ear: whereas that which goes to the heart, and wounds it, makes the hearer rather look down, and turn his thoughts inward upon himſelf. For it is certain that a ſermon, the concluſion whereof makes the auditory look pleaſed, and ſets them all a talking one with another, was either not right ſpoken, or not right heard; it has been fine, and has probably delighted the congregation, rather than edified it. But that ſermon that makes every one go away ſilent and grave, and haſtening to be alone, to meditate or pray over the matter of it in ſecret, has had its true effect.

He that has a taſte and genius for eloquence, muſt improve it by reading Quintilian, and Tully's books of Oratory, and by obſerving the ſpirit and method of Tully's Orations: or if he can enter into Demoſthenes, there he will ſee a much better pattern, there being a ſimplicity, a ſhortneſs, and a ſwiftneſs and rapidity in him, that could not be heard without putting his auditors into a great commotion. All our modern books upon theſe ſubjects, are ſo far ſhort of thoſe great originals, that they can bear no compariſon:

yet F. Rapin's little book of eloquence is by much the beſt, only he is too ſhort. Tully has ſo fully opened all the topics of invention, that a man who has read him, will, if he has any invention of his own, and if he knows thoroughly his matter, rather have too much than too little in his view, upon every ſubject that he treats. This is a noble ſtudy, and of great uſe to ſuch as have judgment to manage it; for artificial eloquence, without a flame within, is like artificial poetry; all its productions are forced and unnatural, and in a great meaſure ridiculous. Art helps and guides nature; but if one was not born with this flame, art will only ſpoil him, make him luſcious and redundant. To ſuch perſons, and indeed to all that are not maſters of the body of divinity, and of the ſcriptures, I ſhould much rather recommend the uſing other mens ſermons, than the making any of their own. But in the choice of theſe, great judgment muſt be uſed: one muſt not take an author that is too much above himſelf; for by that, compared with his ordinary converſation, it will but too evidently appear, that he cannot be the author of his own ſermons; and that will make both him and them loſe too much of their weight. He ought alſo to put thoſe printed ſermons out of that ſtrength and cloſeneſs of ſtile, which looks very well in print; but it is too ſtiff, eſpecially for a common auditory. He may reverſe the method a little, and ſhorten the explanations, that ſo he may retain all that is practical; and that

a man may form himſelf to preaching, he ought to take ſome of the beſt models, and try what he can do upon a text handled by them, without reading them, and then compare his work with theirs; this will more ſenſibly, and without putting him to the bluſh, model him to imitate, or if he can, to excel the beſt patterns. And by this method, if he will reſtrain himſelf for ſome time, and follow it cloſe, he may come to be able to go without ſuch crutches, and to work without patterns: till then, I ſhould adviſe all to make uſe of other mens ſermons, rather than to make any of their own.

The nation has got into ſo good a taſte of ſermons, from the vaſt number of thoſe excellent ones that are in print, that a mean compoſition will be very ill heard; and therefore it is an unſeaſonable piece of vanity, for any to offer their own crudities, till they have well digeſted and ripened them. I wiſh the majeſty of the pulpit were more looked to; and that no ſermons were offered from thence, but ſuch as ſhould make the hearers both the better, and the wiſer; the more knowing, and the more ſerious.

In the delivering of ſermons, a great compoſure of geſture and behaviour is neceſſary, to give them weight and authority: extremes are bad here, as in every thing elſe; ſome affect a light and flippant behaviour; and others think that wry faces and a tone in the voice will ſet off the matter. Grave and compoſed looks, and a natural, but diſtinct pronunciation, will always have

the beſt effects. The great rule, which the maſters of rhetoric preſs much, can never be enough remembred; that to make a man ſpeak well, and pronounce with a right emphaſis, he ought thoroughly to underſtand all that he ſays, be fully perſuaded of it, and bring himſelf to have thoſe affections, which he deſires to infuſe into others. He that is inwardly perſuaded of the truth of what he ſays, and that has a concern about it in his mind, will pronounce with a natural vehemence, that is far more lively than all the ſtrains that art can lead him to. An orator, if we hearken to them, muſt be an honeſt man, and ſpeak always on the ſide of truth, and ſtudy to feel all that he ſays; and then he will ſpeak it ſo as to make others feel it likewiſe. And therefore ſuch as read their ſermons, ought to practiſe reading much in private, and read aloud, that ſo their own ear and ſenſe may guide them, to know where to raiſe or quicken, ſoften or ſweeten their voice, and when to give an articulation of authority, or of conviction; where to pauſe, and where to languiſh. We plainly ſee by the ſtage, what a force there is in pronunciation: the beſt compoſitions are murdered, if ill ſpoken; and the worſt are acceptable, when well ſaid. In tragedies rightly pronounced and acted, though we know that all is a fable and fiction, the tender parts do ſo melt the company, that tears cannot be ſtop'd, even by thoſe who laugh at themſelves for it. This ſhews the power of apt words, and a juſt pronunciation: but becauſe this de-

pends, in a great meaſure, upon the preſent temper of him that ſpeaks, and the lively diſpoſition in which he is, therefore he ought by much previous ſerioufneſs, and by earneſt prayer to God, to endeavour to raiſe his mind to as warm a ſenſe of the things he is to ſpeak of, as poſſibly he can, that ſo his ſermons may make deep impreſſions on his hearers.

This leads me to conſider the difference that is between the reading and ſpeaking of ſermons. Reading is peculiar to this nation, and is endured in no other. It has indeed made that our ſermons are more exact, and ſo it has produced to us many volumes of the beſt that are extant; but after all, though ſome few read ſo happily, pronounce ſo truly, and enter ſo entirely into thoſe affections which they recommend, that in them we ſee both the correctneſs of reading, and the ſerioufneſs of ſpeaking ſermons, yet every one is not ſo happy: ſome by hanging their heads perpetually over their notes, by blundering as they read, and by a curſory running over them, do ſo leſſen the matter of their ſermons, that as they are generally read with very little life or affection, ſo they are heard with as little regard or eſteem. Thoſe who read, ought certainly to be at a little more pains, than for moſt part they are, to read true, to pronounce with an emphaſis, and to raiſe their heads, and to direct their eyes to their hearers: and if they practis'd more alone the juſt way of reading, they might deliver their ſermons with much more advantage. Man is a low ſort

of creature; he does not, nay nor the greater part cannot, conſider things in themſelves, without thoſe little ſeaſonings that muſt recommend them to their affections. That a diſcourſe be heard with any life, it muſt be ſpoken with ſome; and the looks and motions of the eye do carry in them ſuch additions to what is ſaid, that where theſe do not all concur, it has not all the force upon them, that otherwiſe it might have: beſides, that the people, who are too apt to cenſure the clergy, are eaſily carried into an obvious reflection on reading, that it is an effect of lazineſs.

In pronouncing ſermons, there are two ways; the one is when a whole diſcourſe is got by heart, and delivered word for word, as it was writ down: this is ſo vaſt a labour, that it is ſcarce poſſible that a man can be able to hold up long to it: yet there is an advantage even in this to beginners; it fills their memories with good thoughts, and regular meditations: and when they have got ſome of the moſt important of their ſermons by heart in ſo exact a manner, they are thereby furniſhed with topics for diſcourſe. And therefore there are at leaſt two different ſubjects, on which I wiſh all preachers would be at the pains, to form ſermons well in their memories: the one is the grounds of the covenant of grace, of both ſides; God's offers to us in Chriſt, and the conditions that he has required of us, in order to our reconciliation with him. This is ſo important a point, in the whole courſe of our miniſtry, that no man

ought to be to ſeek in the opening or explaining it: and therefore that he may be ripe in it, he ought to have it all rightly laid in his memory, not only as to the notions of it, but to have ſuch a lively deſcription and illuſtration of it all, as to be able to ſpeak of it ſenſibly, fully, and eaſily upon all occaſions. Another ſubject in which every miniſter ought alſo to be well furniſhed, is concerning death and judgment; that ſo when he viſits the ſick, and, as is common, that the neighbours come in, he may be able to make a grave exhortation, in weighty and fit words, upon thoſe heads. Leſs than this, I think no Prieſt ought to have in his memory. But indeed the more ſermons a young beginner gets by heart, he has ſtill thereby the more diſcourſe ready upon thoſe heads; for though the whole contexture of the ſermon will ſtick no longer than he has occaſion for it, yet a great deal will ſtay with him: the idea of the whole, with the moſt important parts of it, will remain much longer.

But now I come to propoſe another method of preaching, by which a Prieſt may be prepared, after a right view of his matter, a true underſtanding his text, and a digeſting of his thoughts upon it into their natural and proper order, to deliver theſe both more eaſily to himſelf, and with a better effect both upon himſelf and his hearers. To come at this, he muſt be for ſome years at a great deal of pains to prepare himſelf to it: yet when that is over, the labour of all the reſt of his life, as to

thoſe performances, will become very eaſy and very pleaſant to him. The preparations to this muſt be theſe; firſt he muſt read the ſcriptures very exactly, he muſt have great portions of them by heart; and he muſt alſo in reading them, make a ſhort concordance of them in his memory; that is, he muſt lay together ſuch paſſages as belong to the ſame matter; to conſider how far they agree or help to illuſtrate one another, and how the ſame thing is differently expreſſed in them; and what various ideas or ways of recommending a thing riſe out of this concordance. Upon this a man muſt exerciſe himſelf much, draw notes of it, and digeſt it well in his thoughts. Then he muſt be ready with the whole body of divinity in his head; he muſt know what parts come in as objections to be anſwered, where difficulties lie, how one part coheres with another, and gives it light. He muſt have this very current in his memory, that he may have things lie before him in one full view; and upon this, he is alſo to work, by making tables, or uſeing ſuch other helps as may lay matters clearly before him. He is more particularly to lay before him a ſyſtem of morality, of all virtues and vices, and of all the duties that ariſe out of the ſeveral relations of mankind; that he may have this matter very full in his eye, and know what are the ſcriptures that belong to all the parts of it: he is alſo to make a collection of all ſuch thoughts, as he finds either in the books of the ancient philoſophers, (where Seneca will be of great uſe to him) or of chriſti-

an authors: he is to ſeperate ſuch thoughts as are forced, and that do become rather a ſtrained declamation, made only to pleaſe, than a ſolid diſcourſe deſigned to perſuade. All theſe he muſt gather, or at leaſt ſuch a number of them, as may help him to form a diſtinct notion of that matter, ſo as to be able both to open it clearly, and to preſs it with affection and vehemence.

Theſe are the materials that muſt be laid together, the practice in uſing them comes next: he that then would prepare himſelf to be a preacher in this method, muſt accuſtom himſelf to talk freely to himſelf, to let his thoughts flow from him, eſpecially when he feels an edge and heat upon his mind; for then happy expreſſions will come in his mouth, things will ventilate and open themſelves to him as he talks them thus in a ſoliloquy to himſelf. He muſt alſo be writing many eſſays upon all ſorts of ſubjects; for by writing he will bring himſelf to a correctneſs both in thinking and in ſpeaking: and thus by a hard practice for two or three years, a man may render himſelf ſuch a maſter in this matter, that he can never be ſurprized, nor will new thoughts ever dry up upon him. He muſt talk over to himſelf the whole body of divinity, and accuſtom himſelf to explain, and prove, to clear objections, and to apply every part of it to ſome practical uſe. He muſt go through human life in all the ranks and degrees of it, and talk over all the duties of theſe; conſider the advantages or diſadvantages in every one of them, their relation to one ano-

ther, the morality of actions, the common virtues and vices of mankind; more particularly the duties of chriſtians, their obligations to meekneſs and humility, to forgive injuries, to relieve the poor, to bear the croſs, to be patient and contented in every ſtate of life, to pray much and fervently, to rejoice ever in God, and to be always praiſing him, and moſt particularly to be applying ſeriouſly to God through Jeſus Chriſt, for mercy and pardon, and for his grace and ſpirit; to be worſhipping him devoutly in public, and to be delighting frequently to commemorate the death of Chriſt, and to partake of the benefits of it. All theſe, I ſay, he muſt talk over and over again to himſelf; he muſt ſtudy to give his thoughts all the heat and flight about them that he can: and if in theſe his meditations, happy thoughts, and noble and tender expreſſions, do at any time offer themſelves, he muſt not loſe them, but write them down; and in his pronouncing over ſuch diſcourſes to himſelf, he muſt obſerve what words ſound harſh, and agree ill together; for there is a muſick in ſpeaking, as well as in ſinging; which a man, tho' not otherwiſe critical in ſounds, will ſoon diſcover. By a very few years practice of two or three of ſuch ſoliloquies a day, chiefly in the morning when the head is cleareſt, and the ſpirits are livelieſt, a man will contract a great eaſineſs both in thinking and ſpeaking.

But the rule I have reſerved laſt, is the moſt neceſſary of all, and without it all the reſt will never do the

buſineſs; it is this, that a man muſt have in himſelf a deep ſenſe of the truth and power of religion; he muſt have a life and flame in his thoughts, with relation to thoſe ſubjects: he muſt have felt in himſelf thoſe things which he intends to explain and recommend to others. He muſt obſerve narrowly the motions of his own mind, the good and bad effects that the ſeveral ſorts of objects he has before him, and affections he feels within him, have upon him; that ſo he may have a lively heat in himſelf, when he ſpeaks of them; and that he may ſpeak in ſo ſenſible a manner, that it may be almoſt felt that he ſpeaks from his heart. There is an authority in the ſimpleſt things that can be ſaid, when they carry viſible characters of genuineneſs in them. Now if a man can carry on this method, and by much meditation and prayer draw down divine influences, which are always to be expected, when a man puts himſelf in the way of them, and prepares himſelf for them; he will often feel, that while he is muſing, a fire is kindled within him, and then he will ſpeak with authority, and without a conſtraint; his thoughts will be true, and his expreſſions free and eaſy: ſometimes this fire will carry him, as it were, out of himſelf; and yet without any thing that is frantic or enthuſiaſtical. Diſcourſes brought forth with a lively ſpirit and heat, where a compoſed geſture, and the proper motions of the eye and countenance, and the due modulations of the voice concur, will have all the effect that can be expected from any thing

that is below immediate inſpiration: and as this will be of uſe to the hearers, ſo it will be of vaſt uſe to the preacher himſelf, to oblige him to keep his heart always in good tune and temper; not to ſuffer irregular or forbidden appetites, paſſions, or projects to prepoſſeſs his mind: theſe will both divert him from going on in the courſe of meditation, in which a man muſt continue many years, till all his thoughts are put in order, poliſh'd and fixed; they will make him likewiſe ſpeak much againſt the grain, with an averſion that will be very ſenſible to himſelf, if not to his hearers; if he has guilt upon him, if his conſcience is reproaching him, and if any ill practices are putting a damp upon that good ſenſe of things, that makes his thoughts ſparkle upon other occaſions, and gives him an air and authority, a tone of aſſurance, and a freedom of expreſſion.

Such a method as I have been opening, has had great ſucceſs with all thoſe that I have known to have tried it. And tho' every one has not that ſwiftneſs of imagination, nor that clearneſs of expreſſion that others may have, ſo that in this men may differ as much as they do in their written compoſitions; yet every man by this method may riſe far above that which he could ever have attained to any other way: it will make even exact compoſitions eaſier to him, and him much readier and freer at them. But great care muſt be uſed by him, before he ſuffers himſelf to ſpeak with the liberty here aimed at in public; he muſt try himſelf at ſmaller ex-

curſions from his fixed thoughts, eſpecially in the applicatory part, where flame and life are more neceſſary, and where a miſtaken word or an unfiniſhed period are leſs obſerved, and ſooner forgiven, than in the explanatory part, where men ought to ſpeak more ſeverely. And as one ſucceeds in ſome ſhort excurſions, he may give himſelf a further ſcope, and ſo by a long practice, he will at laſt arrive at ſo great an eaſineſs both in thinking and ſpeaking, that a very little meditation will ſerve to lay open a text to him, with all the matter that belongs to it, together with the order in which it ought to be both explained and applied. And when a man has attained to a tolerable degree in this, he is then the maſter of his buſineſs; he is maſter alſo of much time, and of many noble thoughts, and ſchemes that will ariſe out of them.

This I ſhall proſecute no further; for if this opening of it does not excite the reader to follow it a little, no enlargements I can offer upon it, will work upon him. But to return to preaching, and ſo conclude this chapter. He that intends truly to preach the goſpel, and not himſelf; he that is more concerned to do good to others, than to raiſe his own fame, or to procure a following to himſelf, and that makes this the meaſure of all his meditations and ſermons, that he may put things in the beſt light, and recommend them with the moſt advantage to his people; that reads the ſcriptures much, and meditates often upon them; that

prays earneſtly to God for direction in his labours, and for a bleſſing upon them; that directs his chief endeavours to the moſt important, and moſt indiſpenſable, as well as the moſt undeniable duties of religion; and chiefly to the inward reformation of his hearers hearts, which will certainly draw all other leſſer matters after it; and that does not ſpend his time, nor his zeal, upon leſſer or diſputable points; this man ſo made, and ſo moulded, cannot miſcarry in his work: he will certainly ſucceed to ſome degree, "The word ſpoken "by him, ſhall not return again:" he ſhall have his crown, and his reward from his labours: and to ſay all that can be ſaid, in one word, with St. Paul, "He ſhall "both ſave himſelf, and them that hear him."

THE CONCLUSION.

I have now gone over all that ſeemed to me moſt important upon this head, of the Paſtoral Care, with as much ſhortneſs and clearneſs as I could: ſo now I am to conclude. The diſcourſe may juſtly ſeem imperfect, ſince I ſay nothing concerning the duties incumbent on Biſhops. But I will upon this occaſion ſay very little on that head. The poſt I am in, gives me a right to teach Prieſts and Deacons their duty; therefore I thought, that without any great preſumption, I might venture on it: but I have been too few years in the high order, to take upon me to teach them, from whom I ſhall ever be ready to learn. This is certain, that ſince, as

was formerly ſaid, the inferior order ſubſiſt in the ſuperior, Biſhops muſt ſtill be under all the obligations of Prieſts: they are then, take the matter at loweſt, bound to live, to labour, and to preach as well as they. But why are they raiſed to a higher rank of dignity and order, an increaſe of authority, and an extent of care? And why have Chriſtian princes and ſtates given them great revenues, and an acceſſion of ſecular honours? All this muſt certainly import their obligation to labour more eminently, and to lay themſelves out more entirely in the work of the goſpel: in which, if the greateſt encouragements and aſſiſtances, the higheſt dignities and privileges belong to them; then according to our Saviour's example and deciſion, "who came not "to be miniſtred unto, but to miniſter;" and who declared, that "he who is firſt ſhall be laſt, and he who "is the greateſt muſt be the ſervant of all;" then I ſay, the higher that any are raiſed in this miniſtry, they ought to lay themſelves out the more entirely in it, and labour the more abundantly. And as our obligations to Chriſt and his church tie us to a greater zeal and diligence, and to a more conſtant application of our care and thoughts; ſo the ſecular ſupports of our honours and revenues were given us, to enable us to go through with that extent of care and juriſdiction that lies upon us. We are not only Watchmen to watch over the flock, but likewiſe over the Watchmen themſelves. We keep the door of the ſanctuary, and will

have much to answer for, if through our remissness or feeble easiness, if by trusting the examination of those we ordain to others, and yielding to intercession and importunity, we bring any into the service of the church, who are not duly qualified for it. In this, we must harden ourselves, and become inexorable, if we will not partake in other mens sins, and in the mischiefs that these may bring upon the church. It is a false pity, and a cruel compassion, if we suffer any considerations to prevail upon us in this matter, but those which the gospel directs. The longer that we know them before we ordain them, the more that we sift them, and the greater variety of trials through which we may make them pass, we do thereby both secure the quiet of our own consciences the more, as well as the dignity of holy things, and the true interest of religion and the church: for these two interests must never be separated; they are but one and the same in themselves; and "what "God has joined together, we must never set asun-"der."

We must be setting constantly before our clergy, their obligations to the several parts of their duty; we must lay these upon them, when we institute or collate them to churches, in the solemnest manner, and with the weightiest words we can find. We must then lay the importance of the care of souls before them, and adjure them, as they will answer to God in the great day, in which we must appear to witness against

was formerly ſaid, the inferior order ſubſiſt in the ſuperior, Biſhops muſt ſtill be under all the obligations of Prieſts: they are then, take the matter at loweſt, bound to live, to labour, and to preach as well as they. But why are they raiſed to a higher rank of dignity and order, an increaſe of authority, and an extent of care? And why have Chriſtian princes and ſtates given them great revenues, and an acceſſion of ſecular honours? All this muſt certainly import their obligation to labour more eminently, and to lay themſelves out more entirely in the work of the goſpel: in which, if the greateſt encouragements and aſſiſtances, the higheſt dignities and privileges belong to them; then according to our Saviour's example and deciſion, "who came not "to be miniſtred unto, but to miniſter;" and who declared, that "he who is firſt ſhall be laſt, and he who "is the greateſt muſt be the ſervant of all;" then I ſay, the higher that any are raiſed in this miniſtry, they ought to lay themſelves out the more entirely in it, and labour the more abundantly. And as our obligations to Chriſt and his church tie us to a greater zeal and diligence, and to a more conſtant application of our care and thoughts; ſo the ſecular ſupports of our honours and revenues were given us, to enable us to go through with that extent of care and juriſdiction that lies upon us. We are not only Watchmen to watch over the flock, but likewiſe over the Watchmen themſelves. We keep the door of the ſanctuary, and will

have much to answer for, if through our remissness or feeble easiness, if by trusting the examination of those we ordain to others, and yielding to intercession and importunity, we bring any into the service of the church, who are not duly qualified for it. In this, we must harden ourselves, and become inexorable, if we will not partake in other mens sins, and in the mischiefs that these may bring upon the church. It is a false pity, and a cruel compassion, if we suffer any considerations to prevail upon us in this matter, but those which the gospel directs. The longer that we know them before we ordain them, the more that we sift them, and the greater variety of trials through which we may make them pass, we do thereby both secure the quiet of our own consciences the more, as well as the dignity of holy things, and the true interest of religion and the church: for these two interests must never be separated; they are but one and the same in themselves; and "what "God has joined together, we must never set asun-"der."

We must be setting constantly before our clergy, their obligations to the several parts of their duty; we must lay these upon them, when we institute or collate them to churches, in the solemnest manner, and with the weightiest words we can find. We must then lay the importance of the care of souls before them, and adjure them, as they will answer to God in the great day, in which we must appear to witness against

them, that they will ſeriouſly conſider and obſerve their ordination-vows, and that they will apply themſelves wholly to that one thing. We muſt keep an eye upon them continually, and be applying reproofs, exhortations, and encouragements, as occaſion offers: we muſt enter into all their concerns, and eſpouſe every intereſt of that part of the church that is aſſigned to their care: we muſt ſee them as oft as we can, and encourage them to come frequently to us; and muſt live in all things with them, "as a father with his children." And that every thing we ſay to ſtir them up to their duty, may have its due weight, we muſt take care ſo to order ourſelves, that they may evidently ſee that we are careful to do our own. We muſt enter into all the parts of the worſhip of God with them; not thinking ourſelves too good for any piece of ſervice that may be done; viſiting the ſick, admitting poor and indigent perſons, or ſuch as are troubled in mind, to come to us; preaching oft, catechiſing and confirming frequently; and living in all things like men that ſtudy to "fulfil their miniſtry, and to do the work of Evange-"liſts."

There has been an opinion of late, much favoured by ſome great men in our church, that the Biſhop is the ſole Paſtor of his whole dioceſs; that the care of all the ſouls is ſingly in him, and that all the incumbents in churches, are only his Curates in the different parts of his pariſh, which was the ancient deſignation

of his dioceſs. I know there are a great many paſſages brought from antiquity to favour this: I will not enter into the queſtion, no not ſo far as to give my own opinion of it. This is certain, that ſuch as are perſuaded of it, ought thereby to conſider themſelves, as under very great and ſtrict obligations to conſtant labour and diligence; otherwiſe it will be thought that they only favour this opinion, becauſe it increaſes their authority, without conſidering that neceſſary conſequence that follows upon it.

But I will go no further on this ſubject at this time, having ſaid ſo much only, that I may not ſeem to fall under that heavy cenſure of our Saviour's, with relation to the Scribes and Phariſees, "That they did bind heavy "burdens, and grievous to be born, upon others; and "laid them upon mens ſhoulders, when they them-"ſelves would not move them with one of their fin-"gers." I muſt leave the whole matter with my readers. I have now laid together with great ſimplicity what has been the chief ſubject of my thoughts for above thirty years. I was formed to them by a Biſhop that had the greateſt elevation of ſoul, the largeſt compaſs of knowledge, the moſt mortified and moſt heavenly diſpoſition, that I ever yet ſaw in mortal; that had the greateſt parts as well as virtues, with the perfecteſt humility that I ever ſaw in man; and had a ſublime ſtrain in preaching, with ſo grave a geſture, and ſuch a majeſty both of thought of language, and of pronunciation, that I never once ſaw

a wandring eye where he preached; and have ſeen whole aſſemblies often melt in tears before him; and of whom I can ſay, with great truth, that in a free and frequent converſation with him, for above two and twenty years, I never knew him ſay an idle word, that had not a direct tendency to edification: and I never once ſaw him in any other temper, but that which I wiſhed to be in, in the laſt minutes of my life. For that pattern which I ſaw in him, and for that converſation which I had with him, I know how much I have to anſwer to God: and though my reflecting on that which I knew in him, gives me juſt cauſe of being deeply humbled in myſelf, and before God; yet I feel no more ſenſible pleaſure in any thing, than in going over in my thoughts all that I ſaw and obſerved in him.

I have alſo another reaſon, that has determined me at this time, to prepare this diſcourſe, and to offer it to the public; from the preſent poſture of our affairs. We are now brought very near the greateſt criſis that ever church or nation had: and as on the one hand, if God ſhould ſo far puniſh us for our ſins, for our contempt of his goſpel, and neglect of our duties, as to deliver us over to the rage of our enemies, we have nothing to look for, but a perſecution more dreadful than any is in hiſtory: ſo if God hears our prayers, and gives us a happy iſſue out of all thoſe dangers, with which the malice of our enemies threatens us; we have in view the greateſt proſpect of a bleſſed and laſting

ſettlement, that even our wiſhes can propoſe to us. Now nothing can ſo certainly avert the one, or prepare us to glorify God in it, if he in his juſtice and wiſdom ſhould call us to a fiery trial of our faith and patience; as the ſerious minding of our functions, of our duties and obligations, the confeſſing of our ſins, and the correcting of our errors. We ſhall be very unfit to ſuffer for our religion, much leſs to die for it, and very little able to endure the hardſhips of perſecution, if our conſciences are reproaching us all the while, that we have procured theſe things to ourſelves; and that by the ill uſe of our proſperity, and other advantages, we have kindled a fire to conſume us. But as we have good reaſon from the preſent ſtate of affairs, as well as from the many eminent deliverances, and happy providences, which have of late, in ſo ſignal a manner, watched over and protected us, to hope that God according to the riches of his mercy, and for the glory of his great name, will hear the prayers that many good ſouls offer up, rather than the cry of theſe abominations that are ſtill among us: ſo nothing can ſo certainly haſten on the fixing of our tranquillity, and the compleating our happineſs, as our lying often between the porch and the altar, and interceding with God for our people; and our giving ourſelves wholly to the miniſtry of the word of God, and to prayer. Theſe being then the ſureſt means, both to procure and to eſtabliſh to us all thoſe great and glorious things that we pray and hope for; this ſeemed to

me a very proper time to publiſh a diſcourſe of this nature.

But that which made it an act of obedience, as well as zeal, was the authority of my moſt reverend Metropolitan; who, I have reaſon to believe, employs his time and thoughts, chiefly to conſider what may yet be wanting to give our church a greater beauty and perfection; and what are the moſt proper means both of purifying and uniting us. To which I thought nothing could ſo well prepare the way, as the offering to the public a plain and full diſcourſe of the paſtoral care, and of every thing relating to it. His grace approved of this, and deſired me to ſet about it: upon theſe motives I writ it, with all the ſimplicity and freedom that I thought the ſubject required, and ſent it to him; by whoſe particular approbation I publiſh it, as I writ it at his direction.

There is indeed one of my motives that I have not yet mentioned, and on which I cannot enlarge ſo fully as I well might. But while we have ſuch an invaluable and unexampled bleſſing, in the perſons of thoſe princes whom God hath ſet over us; if all the conſiderations which ariſe out of the deliverances that God has given us by their means, of the protection we enjoy under them, and of the great hopes we have of them: if, I ſay, all this does not oblige us to ſet about the reforming of every thing that may be amiſs or defective among us, to ſtudy much, and to labour hard; to lead ſtrict and examplary lives, and ſo to ſtop the mouths, and

overcome the prejudices, of all that divide from us; this will make us look like a nation caſt off and forſaken of God, which is nigh unto curſing, and whoſe end is burning. We have reaſon to conclude, that our preſent bleſſings are the laſt eſſays of God's goodneſs to us, and that if we bring forth no fruit under theſe, the next ſentence ſhall be, "Cut it down, why cumbreth it the "ground?" Theſe things lie heavy on my thoughts continually, and have all concurred to draw this treatiſe from me; which I have writ with all the ſincerity of heart, and purity of intention, that I ſhould have had, if I had known that I had been to die at the concluſion of it, and to anſwer for it to God.

To him I humbly offer it up, together with my moſt earneſt prayers, that the deſign here ſo imperfectly offered at, may become truly effectual, and have its full progreſs and accompliſhment; which whenſoever I ſhall ſee, I ſhall then with joy ſay, *Nunc Dimittis, &c.*

CHAP. X.

Of preſentation to benefices, and Simony.

I Do not intend to treat of this matter, as it is a part of our law; but leaving that to the gentlemen of another robe, I ſhall content my ſelf with offering an hiſtorical account of the progreſs of it, with the ſenſe that

the ancient church had of it, together with ſuch reflections as will ariſe out of that.

At firſt the whole body of the clergy, in every city, pariſh or dioceſs, was as a family under the conduct and authority of the Biſhop, who aſſigned to every one of his Preſbyters their peculiar diſtrict, and gave him a proper maintenance out of the ſtock of the oblations of the faithful. None were ordained but by the approbation, or rather the nomination of the people, the Biſhop being to examine into the worth and qualifications of the perſons ſo nominated. In the firſt ages, which were times of perſecution, it is not to be ſuppoſed that ambition or corruption could have any great influence, while a man in holy orders was, as it were put in the front, and expoſed to the firſt fury of the perſecutors. So that what Tertullian ſays on this head will be eaſily believed, * 'That thoſe who preſided over them were firſt tried, 'having obtained that honour, not by paying a price 'for it, but by the teſtimony that was given of them; 'for the things of God were not purchaſed by money;' he alluding probably to the methods uſed by the heathens to arrive at their pontifical dignities.

But as ſoon as wealth and dignity was by the bounty of chriſtian emperors made an appendix to the ſacred function, then we find great complaints made of diſorders in elections, and of partiality in ordinations, on which we ſee ſevere reflections made by the beſt men

* Apology.

both in the eaſtern and weſtern churches. They not only condemned the purchaſing elections and holy orders with money, but all the train of ſolicitations and interceſſions, with all flattery and obſequious courtſhip in order to thoſe things.

They indeed laid the name of ſimony chiefly on the purchaſing of orders by money, which was attempted by Simon of Samaria, commonly called Simon Magus; but they brought other precedents to ſhew how far they carried this matter. Balaam's hire of divination, Gehazi's going after Naaman for a preſent, and Jeroboam's making Prieſts of thoſe * "who filled his hands," are precedents much inſiſted on by them to carry the matter beyond the caſe of a bargain before hand; every thing in the way of practice to arrive at holy orders was all equally condemned. When things were reduced into methodical diviſions, they reckoned a threefold ſimony; that of the hand when money was given, that of the mouth by flatteries, and that of ſervice when men by domeſtic attendance and other employments did, by a temporal drudgery, obtain the ſpiritual dignity.

Chryſoſtom expreſſes this thus; † 'If you do not 'give money, but inſtead of money, if you flatter; if 'you ſet others at work, and uſe other artifices, you 'are as guilty: of all theſe he adds, that as St. Peter 'ſaid to Simon, thy money periſh with thee, ſo may 'thy ambition periſh with thee. St. Jerom ſays, ‡ We

* 2 Chron. xiii. 3. † Hom. in Acta Ap. ‡ In Eſai.

'ſee many reckon orders as a benefice, and do not ſeek 'for perſons, who may be as pillars erected in the houſe 'of God, and may be moſt uſeful in the ſervice of the 'church, but they do prefer thoſe for whom they have 'a particular affection, or whoſe obſequiouſneſs has 'gained their favour, or for whom ſome of the great 'men has interceeded; not to mention the worſt of all, 'thoſe who by the preſents they make them, purchaſe 'that dignity.'

A corruption began to creep into the church in the 5th century, of ordaining vagrant Clerks, without any peculiar title, of whom we find St. Jerom often complaining. This was condemned by the council of Chalcedon in a moſt ſolemn manner. * 'The orders of all 'who were ordained Preſbyters, Deacons, or in the in-'ferior degrees, without a ſpecial title either in the ci-'ty, in ſome village, ſome chapel or monaſtry, are de-'clared null and void; and, to the reproach of thoſe 'who ſo ordained them, they are declared uncapable of 'performing any function:' but how ſacred ſoever the authority of this council was, it did not cure this great evil; from which many more have ſprung.

A practice roſe not long after this, which opened a new ſcene. Men began to build churches on their own grounds, at their own charges, and to endow theſe; and they were naturally the maſters, and in the true ſignification of the Roman word, the patrons of them.

* Can. 6.

All the churches in the firſt matricula were to be ſerved by perſons named to them by the Biſhop, and were to be maintained by him out of the revenue of the church; but theſe were put upon another foot, and belonged to the proprietors of the ground, to the builders, and the endowers. * They were alſo to offer to the Biſhop a Clerk to ſerve in them. It ſeems they began to think that the Biſhop was bound to ordain all ſuch as were named by them: † But Juſtinian ſettled this matter by a law, for he provided that the 'Patriarch ſhould not 'be obliged to ordain ſuch as were nominated by the 'patron, unleſs he judged them fit for it:' the reaſon given is, that 'the holy things of God might not be 'profaned.' ‡ It ſeems he had this in his eye, when by another law he condemns thoſe who received any thing for ſuch a nomination, for ſo I underſtand the *patrocinium ordinationis*.

The elections to moſt ſees lay in many hands, and to keep out not only corruption but partiality from having a ſhare in them, he by a ſpecial law required, ‖ 'That 'all perſons, ſeculars as well as eccleſiaſtics, who had 'a vote in elections, ſhould join an oath to their ſuf-'frage, that they were neither moved to it by any gift, 'promiſe, friendſhip, or favour, or by any other affecti-'on, but that they gave their vote upon their knowledge 'of the merits of the perſons;' it will eaſily be imagi-

* Fundus Aedificatio & Des. † Novel. 57. c. 2. ‡ Novel. 6. cap. 1. ‖ Novel. 137. cap. 2.

ned that no rule of this kind could be much regarded in corrupt ages.

Gregory the Great is very copious in lamenting these disorders, and puts always the threefold division of simony together. * *Manus, Oris, & Ministerii. Hincmar* cites the Prophet's words, † "he that shaketh his "hands from holding of bribes:" in the vulgar it is from every bribe, applying it to three sorts of simony. And in that letter to Lewis the 3d King of France, he protests 'he knew no kinsman nor friend, and he only consider-'ed the life, learning, and other good qualities necessa-ry to the sacred ministry.' Those ages were very corrupt, so that the great advantages that the Popes had, in the disputes concerning the investitures into benefices, were taken from this, that servile obsequiousness and flatteries were the methods used in procuring them; of which it were easy to bring a great and copious proof, but that it is needless.

I shall only name two provisions made against all these sinistrous practices: one was among us in a council at Exeter, in which this charge is given, ‡ 'Let all 'men look into their own consciences, and examine 'themselves with what design they aspire to orders; if 'it is that they may serve God more virtuously and 'more acceptably, or if it is for the temporals, and 'that they may extort benefices from those who ordain 'them, for we look on such as simoniacs.' ‖ In the

* Tom. 2. 195. † Isa. xxxiii. 15. ‡ Synod Exon 1287. c. 8. ‖ Sess. 12.

council of Basil, in which they attempted the restoring the freedom of elections, as a mean to raise the reputation of the sacred function, they appointed that an oath should be taken by all electors, 'That they should not 'give their voice for any who had, as they were cre- 'dibly informed, endeavoured to procure it to them- 'selves either by promising or giving any temporal thing 'for it, or by any prayer or petition either by them- 'selves, or by the interposition of any other, or by any 'other way whatsoever directly or indirectly.' This would go as far, as those who took it considered themselves bound by an oath, to secure elections from corruption or practice.

I will go no further to prove that both fathers and councils, in their provisions against simony, considered the practices of application, importunity, solicitations and flatteries, as of the same nature with simony: and therefore, tho' our law considers only simony, as it is a bargain in the which money or the equivalent is given or promised, yet the sense of the church went much further on this head, even in the most corrupt ages. The canon law does very often mention simony in its threefold distinction, *Manus*, *Linguae*, & *Obsequii*; it being still reckoned a duty both in the giver and receiver, that the gift should be free and voluntary.

In the church of Rome a right of patronage is, according to their superstition, a matter of great value; for in every mass the patron is to be remembred by a

ſpecial collect, ſo that it ſaves them a great charge in a daily maſs ſaid for them. To us this effect ceaſes; but ſtill it is a noble piece of property, ſince a patron has the nomination of him that has a care of ſouls committed to him; but as it is in it ſelf highly valuable, ſo a great account is to be given for it, to him who made and purchaſed thoſe ſouls, and in whoſe ſight they are of ineſtimable value, and who will reckon ſeverely with ſuch patrons as do not manage it with a due care.

It is all one what the conſideration is on which it is beſtowed, if regard is not in the firſt place had to the worth of the perſon ſo nominated; and if he is not judged fit and proper to undertake the cure of ſouls: for with relation to the account that is to be given to the great Biſhop of ſouls, it is all one whether money, friendſhip, kindred, or any carnal regard, was the chief motive to the nomination.

I know it may be ſaid, no man but one in holy orders is capable of being poſſeſſed of a beneſice, and in order to that he is to be examined by the Biſhop, tho' already ordained, before he can be poſſeſſed of it: but the ſin is not the leſs, becauſe others come in to be partakers of it. Still a patron muſt anſwer to God for his ſhare, if he has nominated a perſon without due care, and without conſidering whether he thinks him a proper perſon for undertaking ſo great a truſt.

I will not carry this matter ſo far as to ſay, that a patron is bound to chuſe the fitteſt and moſt deſerving

perſons he can find out; that may put him under great ſcruples, and there being a great diverſity in the nature of pariſhes, and in the ſeveral abilities neceſſary for the proper duties of the paſtoral care, it may be too great a load to lay on a man's conſcience an obligation to diſtinguiſh who may be the fitteſt perſon. But this is very evident, that a patron is bound to name no perſon to ſo important a care, as the charge of ſouls, of whom he has not at leaſt a probable reaſon to believe that he has the due qualifications, and will diſcharge the truſt committed to him. Some motives may be baſer than others; but even the conſideration of a child to be provided for, by a cure of ſouls, when the main requiſites are wanting, is in the ſight of God no better than ſimony. For in the nature of things it is all one, if one ſells a beneſice, that by the ſale he may provide for a child, and if he beſtows it on a child, only out of natural affection, without conſidering his ſon's fitneſs to manage ſo great a truſt. Perpetual advowſons, which are kept in families as a proviſion for a child, who muſt be put in orders whatever his averſion to it, or unfitneſs for it may be, bring a proſtitution on holy things. And parents who preſent their undeſerving children, have this aggravation of their guilt, that they are not ſo apt to be deceived in this caſe, as they may be when they preſent a ſtranger. Concerning theſe they may be impoſed on by the teſtimony of thoſe whom they do not ſuſpect; but they muſt be ſuppoſed to be better informed as to their own children.

It is alſo certain, that orders are not given by all Biſhops, with that anxiety of caution that the importance of the matter requires. And if a perſon is in orders, perhaps qualified for a lower ſtation, yet he may want many qualifications neceſſary for a greater cure: and the grounds on which a preſentation can be denied, are ſo narrow, that a Biſhop may be under great difficulties, who yet knows he cannot ſtand the ſuit, to which he lies open, when he refuſes to comply with the patron's nomination.

The ſum of all this is, that patrons ought to look on themſelves as bound to have a ſacred regard to this truſt that is veſted in them, and to conſider very carefully what the nature of the benefice that they give is, and what are the qualifications of the perſon they preſent to it; otherwiſe the ſouls that may be loſt by a bad nomination, whatſoever may have been their motive to it, will be required at their hands.

At firſt the right of patronage was an appendant of the eſtate in which it was veſted; and was not to be alienated but with it, and then there was ſtill leſs danger of an ill nomination. For it may be ſuppoſed that he who was moſt concerned in a pariſh, would be to a good degree concerned to have it well ſerved. But a new practice has riſen among us, and for ought I have been able to learn, it is only among us, and is in no other nation or church whatſoever. How long it has been among us, I am not verſed enough in our law books to be able to

tell. And that is the ſeparating the advowſon from the eſtate to which it was annexed; and the ſelling it, or a turn in it, as an eſtate by it ſelf. This is ſo far allowed by our law, that no part of ſuch a traffic comes within the ſtatute againſt ſimony, unleſs when the benefice is open. I ſhall ſay nothing more on this head, ſave only that whoſoever purchaſes a turn, or a perpetual advowſon with a deſign to make the benefice go to a child, or remain in a family, without conſidering the worth or qualifications of the perſon to be preſented to it, put themſelves and their poſterity under great temptations. For here is an eſtate to be conveyed to a perſon, if he can but get thro' thoſe ſlight examinations upon which orders are given, and has negative virtues, that is, he is free from ſcandalous ſin, though he has no good qualities, nor any fixed intentions of living ſuitably to his profeſſion, of following the ſtudies proper to it, and of dedicating himſelf to the work of the miniſtry; on the contrary, he perhaps diſcovers a great deal of pride, paſſion, covetouſneſs, and an ungoverned love of pleaſure, and is ſo far from any ſerious application of mind to the ſacred functions, that he has rooted in him an averſion to them.

The ill effects of this are but too viſible, and we have great reaſon to apprehend that perſons who come into the ſervice of the church with this diſpoſition of mind, will deſpiſe the care of ſouls as a thing to be turned over to one of a mechanic genius, who can never riſe a-

bove ſome low performances; they will be inceſſantly aſpiring higher and higher, and by fawning attendances, and the meaneſt compliances with ſuch as can contribute to their advancement, they will think no ſervices too much out of their road, that can help to raiſe them: they will meddle in all intrigues, and will cry up and cry down things in the baſeſt methods, as they hope to find their account in them. I wiſh with all my heart that theſe things were not too notorious, and that they did not lay ſtumbling-blocks in men's way, which may give advantages to the tribe of profane libertines to harden them in their prejudices againſt, not only the ſacred functions, but all revealed religion in general. I ſhall end this head, leaving it on the conſciences of all patrons, and obteſting them by all that is ſacred, to reflect ſeriouſly on this great truſt, that the law has put in their hands; and to conſider what account they are to give of it in the great day.

But if patrons ought to conſider themſelves under ſtrict obligations in this matter, how much more ought they to lay the ſenſe of the duties of their function to heart, who have by ſolemn vows dedicated themſelves to the work of the miniſtry? What notion have they of running without being ſent, who tread in thoſe ſteps? Do not they ſay, according to what was threatned as a curſe on the poſterity of * "Eli, put me, I pray thee, "into one of the Prieſt's offices, that I may eat a piece

* 1 Sam ii. 36.

" of bread." Do they not feel theſe words as a character of what they ſay within themſelves, when they come up to the altar? Can they not truſt God, and go on fitting themſelves in the beſt manner they can for holy functions, waiting for ſuch an interpoſition of providence as ſhall open a clear way to them, to ſome ſtation in the church; not doubting, but that if God by a motion of his ſpirit called them to holy orders, he will raiſe up inſtruments to bring that about, and put it in the heart of ſome one or other to give or to procure to them a poſt, without their own engaging in that ſordid merchandize, or deſcending to any tho' leſs ſcandalous methods, which bring with them ſuch a proſtitution of mind, that they who run into them, cannot hope to raiſe themſelves the eſteem due to the ſacred function, which is the foundation of all the good they can do by their labours. If things turn croſs to them in a poſt, to which ſuch endeavours may have brought them, what comfort can they have within them? Or what confidence can they have in God? When their own conſciences will reproach them with this, that it is no wonder if what was ſo ill acquired, ſhould proſper no better. When they come to die, the horror of an oath falſly taken, which they palliated by an equivocating ſenſe, will be a terrible companion to them in their laſt minutes: when they can no more carry off the matter by evaſions or bold denials, but are to appear before that God, to whoſe eyes all things are naked and opened. Then all the ſcandal they

have given, all the ſouls that they have loſt or neglected, all the reproaches that they have brought on their function, and on the church, for which perhaps they have pretended no ordinary meaſure of zeal, all theſe, I ſay, will come upon them as an armed man, and ſurround them with the ſenſe of guilt, and the terrors of that conſuming fire that is ready to devour them. Men who have by unlawful methods, and a prevaricating oath come into a benefice, cannot truly repent of it, but by departing from it. For the unlawful oath will ſtill lie heavy on them, till that is done. This is the indiſpenſable reſtitution in this caſe, and unleſs this is done, they live on and die in the ſin unrepented of. God is not mocked, tho' men are. I will leave this here, for I can carry it no higher.

As for thoſe who have not prevaricated in the oath, but yet have been guilty of practice and methods to arrive at benefices, I do not lay this of relinquiſhing their benefices on them: but certainly if they ever come to right notions of the matter, they will find juſt ground to be deeply humbled before God for all their practices that way. If they do truly mourn for them, and abſtain from the like for the future, and if they apply themſelves with ſo much the more zeal to the labours of their function, and redeem the meanneſs of their former practices by a ſtricter courſe of life, by their ſtudies and their diligence, they may by that compenſate for the too common arts by which they arrived at their poſts.

I know theſe things are ſo commonly practiſed, that as few are out of countenance who tread in ſuch beaten paths, ſo I am afraid they are too little converſant in juſt notions to feel the evil of them. It is no wonder if their labours are not bleſt, who enter on them by ſuch low and indirect methods: whereas men who are led by an over-ruling providence into ſtations, without any motions or procurement of their own, as they have an unclouded call from God, ſo they have the foundation of a true firmneſs in their own minds. They can appeal to God, and ſo have a juſt claim to his protection and bleſſing: every thing is eaſy to them, becauſe they are always eaſy within. If their labours are bleſſed with ſucceſs, they rejoice in God, and are by that animated to continue in them, and to increaſe their diligence. If that is denied them, ſo that they are often forced to cry out, "* my leanneſs, my leanneſs," I have laboured in vain; they are humbled under it; they examine themſelves more carefully, if they can find any thing in their own conduct that may occaſion it, which they will ſtudy to correct, and ſtill they perſiſt in their labour; knowing that if they continue doing their duty, whatever other effects that may have, thoſe faithful Shepherds, † "when "the chief Shepherd ſhall appear, ſhall receive from "him a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

To all this I will only add ſomewhat relating to bonds of reſignation. A bond to reſign at the pleaſure of

* Iſa. xxiv. 16. † 1 Pet. v. 4.

the patron carries with it a baſe ſervitude, and ſimony in its full extent: and yet becauſe no money is given, ſome who give thoſe bonds do very ignorantly apprehend that they may, with a good conſcience, ſwear the oath of ſimony. There is but one way to cure the miſchief of this great evil, which can have no effect, if Biſhops will reſolve to accept of no reſignation made upon ſuch bonds. Since by the common law a Clerk is ſo tied to his Biſhop and to his cure, that he cannot part with it without the Biſhop's leave. By this all theſe bonds may be made ineffectual.

Other bonds are certainly more innocent, by which a Clerk only binds himſelf to do that which is otherwiſe his duty. And ſince the forms of our courts are dilatory and expenſive, and there is not yet a full proviſion made againſt many abuſes which a good patron would ſecure a pariſh from, I ſee no juſt exception to this practice, where the abuſe is ſpecially certified; ſo that nothing is reſerved in the patron's breaſt, by general words, of which he, or his heirs, who perhaps may not inherit his virtues as they do his fortunes, may make an ill uſe. It is certain our conſtitution labours yet under ſome defects, which were provided againſt by that noble deſign brought ſo near perfection in that work intitled *Reformatio Legum Eccleſiaſticarum*, which it is to be hoped will be at ſome time or other taken up again, and perfected.

The affinity of the former matter leads me to give an

account of ſomewhat relating to my ſelf. When I was firſt put into the poſt which I ſtill hold, I found there were many market towns in the dioceſs very poorly provided. So ſince there are about 50 dignities and prebends belong to the cathedral, I conſidered how by the diſpoſing of theſe I might mend the condition of the incumbents in the market towns, and ſecure ſuch a help to their ſucceſſors. And by the advice of ſome very eminent divines and canoniſts, this method was reſolved on, that when I gave a prebend to any ſuch incumbent, he ſhould give a bond that if he left that benefice, he ſhould at the ſame time reſign his prebend, that it might go to his ſucceſſor. This went on for ſome years with an univerſal approbation.

But when a humour began to prevail of finding fault, this was cried out upon as a grievance, bordering upon ſimony. I upon that drew up a vindication of my practice, from great authority, out of civilians and canoniſts. But upon ſecond thoughts I reſolved to follow that ſaying of Solomon's, * "Leave off contention before it be "meddled with or engaged in." So to lay the clamour that ſome ſeemed reſolved to raiſe, I reſolved to drop my deſign, and ſo delivered back all the bonds that I had taken.

I will offer nothing either in the way of vindication or reſentment, being ſatisfied to give a true relation of the

* Prov. xvii. 14.

matter, leaving it to the reader's judgment to approve or cenſure as he ſees cauſe: and thus I conclude this chapter, which I thought was wanting to compleat my deſign in writing this treatiſe.

FINIS.

FH
MVSEVM
BRITANNICVM

MYSTERY
MANUSCRIPT